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International Walther League

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THE CRESSET

Letters to My Children's Teachers

E. SCHALLER

Passion Pictures

ANDRE DU CLOS

Monthly Survey of Books

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE, THE ARTS, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOL. 2 NO. 5

Twenty-five Cents

The CRESSET

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THE CRESSET

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE, THE ARTS, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NOTES and COMMENT

A Dictator Speaks—Strange Ways—Chain Stores—Screen Syrup—The Liquor Question—Exit Dr. Schacht

By THE EDITORS

A Dictator Speaks

THE Reich wants only peace with America and is convinced that the American people want only peace with Germany."

"Hitler hits at U.S. as he bids for colonies."

Yes, these two quotations refer to the same speech, Herr Hitler's address at the first session of the "Greater German Reichstag." They are indicative of two things, an unscrupulous type of journalism, which, while remaining within the bare limits of truth, does not concern itself with the impression its reporting leaves on the minds of its readers; and the nature of the speech itself, which was so unexpectedly unprovocative that American journalism, geared to the war hysteria of the past months, could not shift into neutral fast enough.

It is significant also that an address, upon which, we were told, the fate of Europe's next twelve months depended, was subordinated to news of a fourteen inch snowfall on the front pages of a large city's newspapers, when it turned out to be less bellicose than anticipated. Peace doesn't seem to have much news value.

At this late date we are not concerned with the details of Mr. Hitler's address. Subsequent events have already thrown light on some of his ambiguous statements. But in the light of his previous speeches one or two impressions may be noted.

The first, and most obvious, was a distinct impression that Mr. Hitler was speaking with his back flat against a wall. This defensive note was especially evident in his references to Germany's relations with

other countries, whose attitude he is not able to understand. Question: Does Mr. Hitler, looking down the vistas of 1939, find himself in the position of the sorcerer's apprentice who cannot rid himself of the forces he has called to his aid, and which threaten to overwhelm him?

The second impression is that Mr. Hitler is either ignorant of, or totally misunderstands, the implications of the totalitarian ideology he professes to believe. This is most evident in his sentences about the relation of the state to the church, in which he claimed to be the Church's protector and sustainer, and threatened to annihilate ruthlessly any pastors who meddled in politics.

Christianity does not attribute an absolute and sacred significance to any particular form of government. The ideal, the perfect state is non-existent, because every state means the rule of one set of men over another, a situation dependent for its existence on the fact of sin and human weakness in the world. When these disappear, the rule, and the necessity for it, will vanish also.

But the state, if it is not to run directly contrary to Christianity, must recognize that each human being has particular and qualitatively unique rights, and an individual destiny. While some forms of government can admit this, at least in theory, the totalitarian state, if it is consistent, cannot. Christianity is built on the principle of the eternal value of the individual and his inviolable personality. It is that personality, and not the state, which may bear the image and likeness of God; which belongs to eternity and resides only temporarily in the framework of the state, which belongs to time. It is for that personality, and not for the state, that the Kingdom of God is prepared. As a Russian writer, out of the crucible of life in a totalitarian state, has put it, "The only political principle which is connected with absolute truth is the principle of the subjective rights of the human personality, of the freedom of spirit, of conscience, of thought and speech."

It would seem to be impossible for Mr. Hitler to be both the leader of present-day Germany and the protector of the Christian Church.

Strange Ways

THE ways of justice are sometimes devious ways. Al Capone has been cooling his heels these many moons, not because of the serious crimes that are usually laid at his door, but because he failed to pay income tax on the sums that somehow found their way into his pockets. Now another of Chicago's gentlemen of leisure

finds himself in the toils because, it is charged, he realized $50,000 on a kidnapping and did not give the government its lawful percentage on the transaction. Not so many years ago the phrase, "tainted money," was current in the land. Nowadays, it would seem, the principle, *Pecunia non olet* (Money does not smell), is in favor. It is an ancient principle. Robbers in Sicily, one reads, for centuries shared the proceeds of their trade with the saints in the village churches, asking in return only that the saints protect them and bless their efforts. But times have changed. Now criminals are expected to share with the government and yet go their way without its protection or even its blessing.

Chain Stores

AGITATION and lobbying against chain stores has of late been the order of the day. *Fortune,* in its continuous survey of public opinion, recently propounded the question, "Which do you think would be the best policy toward chain stores?" The answers received tabulated as follows: Let them alone, 47.9 per cent; tax them extra, 37.3; put them out of business, 6.3; don't know, 8.5. We are glad to find ourselves, for once, in step with the majority of those who have an opinion on an issue. We buy our groceries at chain stores because we pay cash and are willing to carry our purchases, and we have never been able to see any unfairness in the fact that thereby we gain a decided benefit in lower prices for the same quality. The non-chain stores in our community, even though we trade cash-and-carry with them, expect us to pay the same prices which they ask for delivery and deferred payment. Why should we be taxed for the convenience and the dead accounts of others? Let those pay for these services who want them.

Screen Syrup

ST. LOUISANS saw *Sweethearts* last month, and if our reader is not interested in our comment on this production he has the unquestioned right to stop right here or turn a few pages and see whether Low Brow is coming back. If he is willing to follow, let him understand that he is about to read the opinion of a very much disappointed commentator. Victor Herbert's operetta of the same sugary name has some fine melodies, and plot and incident are quite unobjectionable, so that a group of young church people produced it during the winter without any cuts, I believe. We intended to observe the difference

between an amateur and a professional production of the operetta, and what we saw and heard was professional, but it was not the operetta. Not by any stretch of language could this be called the Herbert operetta. It was completely transmogrified, with the plot eliminated to the last shred, other characters introduced, and nothing left but a few melodies.

If the producer took for granted that a lame apologetic explanation in pale blue type at the end, which nobody reads, would satisfy those whose feeling of artistic fitness had been outraged, he was mistaken. Some of us will take no chance hereafter on accepting any title as guarantee that we shall have the pleasure of meeting an old favorite.

So the title was a misnomer.

The producer resisted the temptation of putting sex appeal into the foreground of the revamped plot and action. The main characters were a married couple (in the plot, though not in real life), and when the threadbare theme of the matrimonial triangle developed, there was no attempt to capitalize on the ability of the actors to indulge in suggestive byplay. So far good. There was nothing obscene or lecherous, and if some of us have added two new names to the lengthening list of screen "stars" that will keep us at a safe distance from the box office, it is for two reasons:

1. We don't like syrup. *Sweethearts* is screen syrup, movie molasses; and ever since we had syrup three times a day at the dear old Alma Mater in Fort Wayne, we don't like the suggestion of it.

2. *Sweethearts,* as hashed up by Hollywood, 1938, is one of those films that have one sole purpose: to glorify the theatrical profession. Not only is a change in the leading characters of a Broadway production treated as an event of world-shaking proportions, when as a matter of fact not a dozen people would care three whoops, or a lead dime, if you please, whether the "stars" stay with the troop or leave for Hollywood—but these characters are pictured as the most eminent representatives of the male and female sexes respectively.

Not only is the theater glorified in a way that must strike the most ordinary mind as silly, but the successful actor is placed on a pinnacle (literally), above the clouds (once more in the most literal sense), so that every one of us who is trying to make a living through some humble service to humanity must feel the sting of insult.

To this end—the glorification of the stage profession and the deification of two principals gifted slightly above the average—the producer has sacrificed artistic honesty and has created a plot resting on a mess of improbabilities.

But when all is said and done our chief complaint is not that the dish was offered to us under a false name, that something had gone wrong with the recipe, and that the cook had done the worst a cook is capable of—but our main grievance is that the syrup ladle is in evidence from soup to nuts. And a thing like that in technicolor!

Concerning Canaries

WE WENT to college. And like most privileged youngsters of our class (social, not academic) we managed to get home every year for Christmas. But when the wagons and baseball gloves and Tinker-Toy sets under the tree gave way to shirts and socks and books and bookends we suddenly stumbled on the idea that we were growing up. And that would never do. We tried dragging out the old toy-box from the attic, but that didn't work. Somehow the Meccano parts went together too easily. We took a classical course in high school, and toy autos, of course, held absolutely no attraction "at our age." And, after all, Christmas is no time for old things. True to our generation, we craved something new, something spontaneous, lively, active in itself. Sis got the bright idea. A dog. Whom to give it to? You can't just *get* things at Christmas. You have to *give*. Mother. "How would you like a pet for Christmas, Mother?" "Well, some goldfish, or a canary. I'd love to have a canary. But nothing big." Goldfish were out. Canaries sang and hopped around, at best. But a pet in a 10 x 10 x 10 cage! No, a dog or nothing. But Mother wanted a canary. "But canaries are so small. They have no life, no spirit. They don't *do* anything. They're—they're sissies. All of them!" Mother still wanted a canary. It seems she had had enough life and action around the house for one lifetime. So for four Christmases we gave her four dogs, one each. Where they disappeared to is four other stories.

But now we're sorry. We listened to a radio program the other day. It is fortunate that we were very, very comfortably seated at the time the program came on else we might never have had this revelation. Organ music—and canaries! (Another one of those combinations. One excellent, the other tolerable, but the two together!) Ugh! So disgustingly sweet! So unconcernedly light and cheerful! We had a glimpse of Scarlett O'Hara "befo' the horrid wo'." Just as if there were no such thing as the American caste system or an armament race or "Juden Verboten." (Maybe we're just jealous because canaries, being dumb animals, don't have

such things.) But—! Static no doubt. But there it was again. Just because the Federal Radio Commission lets an allegedly intelligent clergyman blow bubbles of hate out over the air waves doesn't mean that it would tolerate a woodpecker over a nation-wide canary concert. But there it was. Plain as day. A dirty radical among all those fluffy, puffed-up, carefree, yodeling primas. We'll just bet he was dirty. Like the dirty little newsboy who sits in the corner drugstore every Friday night and blows through his straw in his coke. It did our heart good. A real independent. A mind of his own. A regular guy. If we could only have heard him years ago. We retract. All canaries are not sissies. (Even now we hear a cynical "So what." All right. It's symbolic, isn't it?)

A Parable of Ahfed the Wise

On Rocking the Boat

I SATE in the Lawn-swing and looked out upon the Placid Waters of Kasota, as the Indians aforetime called the Lake because of its clear water. And I meditated on the Goodness of the Lord in permitting me, for a few weeks in the summer-time, to have a Quiet Retreat on its shores, with the Opportunity to relax from the Arduous Routine of the rest of the year, when, verily, my nose is pressed rather hard on the Proverbial Grindstone.

And soon my Next-door Neighbor walked over and sate down beside me.

Now my Neighbor is not a Talkative Fellow, so after we had passed the Time of Day, we smoked our pipes in silence and watched a Row-boat, filled with Young Folks, slowly moving toward our shore. They were laughing and shouting and having a Good Time, until one of the Young Fellows took the notion to stand up and start Rocking the Boat. The young ladies Screamed and Scolded, but he did not Desist until he had nearly spilled them all into the Lake.

And my Neighbor said, It's that fool Jones Boy. He's one of the poorest swimmers on the Lake, and yet he is always up to Tricks like that. One of these days Someone will come to grief from his Rocking the Boat. I often wonder why it is that the poorest swimmers enjoy Rocking the Boat and the poorest divers like to push other folks off the Diving-Board?

And I said, That is one of the Quirks of Human Nature.

And he said, Explain thyself.

And I said, Hast thou not noticed that the Fellow who knoweth least about a matter is usually the Readiest with advice and the Quickest to criticize and the Fool-

hardiest at taking unnecessary risks. Thou knowest the Old Adage, Fools rush in where angels Fear to tread!

And he said, Verily, come to think of it, thou art right.

And I added, As a rule, Rocking the Boat causeth irritation only to a Few and endangereth a Limited Number, but it becometh a very Serious Matter when people start Rocking the Ship of State.

And he said, I begin to get thy Drift. We are having considerable Boat Rocking in Washington right now.

And I said, It seemeth to be an Incurable American Trait. I am reminded of a story that is told about Abraham Lincoln. In those days the celebrated French acrobat Blondin was at the Height of his Career. One of his Favorite Stunts was to cross Niagara Falls on a tight-rope. He even did it with Variations, either blindfolded, or in a sack, or on stilts, or trundling a wheel-barrow. His Top Performance was the day he sat down midway and Prepared an Omellete and ate it.

One day a delegation from the Middle West waited on President Lincoln. It was at a time when things looked Dark for the National Cause. This delegation gave vent to a Shower of Criticism. Nothing that the Administration was doing seemed Right to them. The President listened Patiently, and then in a Quiet Voice delivered himself of a Classic Reply to all Boat-Rockers.

He said, Suppose, Gentlemen, all the Property that you were worth was in gold, and you put it into the Hands of Blondin to carry across Niagara River on a rope. Would you Shake that Rope and keep shouting at him, "Blondin, stand up a Little Straighter —go a Little Faster—lean a Little More to the North or to the South!"?

No, you would Hold your Breath as well as your Tongue, and keep your hands off until he was Safely Over.

You must realize that the Government is carrying an Immense Weight—untold treasures are in our hands; we are doing the Best We can. Don't badger the Government; keep silence, and we will carry you Safely Across.

And my Neighbor said, There is a Timely Moral in that story.

And I said, Thou art Absolutely Right, but only for those who will learn it.

Exit Dr. Schacht

SO Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht, of the high collars and the wily schemes, has received his walking-papers. Poor Dr. Schacht! He did his best. Thanks largely to his cunning in the field of high finance, Germany has

been able to arm herself to the teeth. But even his wizardry, amazing as it is, can go only so far and not one step farther. It is true that the complete regimentation of the German people, the ever-handy power to hurl slackers and dissenters into concentration camps, and the ability to mulct the Jews with merciless persistence were potent ingredients in the brew which the estimable witch-doctor so busily forced down the gullets of the many millions who live, move, and have their being under the aegis of Adolf Hitler.

Is it possible that Dr. Schacht realized that he had come to the end of his tether? Dare we surmise that he told his *Fuehrer* in no uncertain terms that, in the matter of finances, Germany is tottering perilously on the brink of utter ruin? Outwardly at least, the relations between Schacht and his master appear to be cordial. The hard-driving and—lest we forget—hard-pressed dictator told him plainly that his illustrious name would "be connected forever with the first epoch of national rearmament."

It is evident that the second stage—whatever that may be—is now rapping at Germany's door. And Hitler dare not stop. Truly, the lot of a dictator, like that of the harassed policemen in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance,* is not a happy one. What will happen? Will the Roman Catholic Church be bled next? Will the rich, who so far have been treated with signal leniency by their own worthy Dr. Schacht, be compelled to "kick in" to a far larger extent than they have been doing? Will there be more of those ingeniously devised barter schemes to bloat Germany's foreign trade? It will be vastly more than interesting to observe what the successor of the high-powered director of the *Reichsbank* will attempt to do.

Women in Political Life

WE ARE old enough to have lived through the period when certain women waged their historic battle for Woman's Suffrage. It is still impressed on our memory that our own mother and sisters, and later on our wife, were not at all interested in the whole question. They did not feel themselves down-trodden, neglected, or shabbily treated by the opposite sex. In fact they were perfectly willing to let the men take care of the political interests of the family. Since those early days of the great battle for the emancipation of womanhood, the female membership of our clan has been materially increased by numerous sisters-in-law, nieces, and a daughter, all old enough to vote, and our field of observation as far as

women voters outside of the family are concerned has also been rather greatly enlarged.

Our findings, with extremely rare exceptions, have been that the women vote with their men. We have noted, in a number of instances, that the wives have simply adopted the political party of their husbands, even though they came out of families in which the father and brothers were of the other political group. As a rule the political temperature of a household is in line with the husband's interest. Again, in most households with which we are acquainted, the women vote because their husbands ask them to. The women themselves are not interested.

We have long noted these observations and probably would have kept them to ourselves still longer; but now comes the National League of Women Voters and bears out our own conclusions. This League announces that women are losing their interest in politics. Ten years ago there were 149 women legislators in thirty-eight states. Now there are only 127 in twenty-seven states. In Congress the women legislators have declined from nine to five. To top it all off, a very prominent lady of the land insists that it is the women themselves who are against the woman office-holder. All of which might lead one to the conclusion that the battle for Woman's Suffrage was "much ado about nothing."

The Liquor Question

WHEN repeal went into effect five years ago certain prognostications were made, certain warnings given, and certain pledges at least indicated. Some people declared prohibition dead, never to be revived; others gave warning to the liquor industry that the duration of repeal would depend largely on that industry's willingness to co-operate wholeheartedly with the agencies of law enforcement; still others asserted that the evils inherent in the liquor traffic could not be regulated and that excesses would in the end bring about another prohibition—one that would stick. Leading brewers and distillers in their public utterances pledged themselves to a strict observance, not only of the letter, but also of the spirit, of any regulatory legal enactments.

All that was five years ago. How do matters stand today? Recent surveys, such as that by Dr. George Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion, show that our people are doing some serious thinking on the liquor question and that certain definite trends are noticeable. What are some of their reactions? We shall enumerate our own findings as representative of

views held by many of our people:

1. There is increasing drunkenness.

2. There is too much drinking of gin and whiskey by young people.

3. There is more reckless driving as a result of drink.

4. While one of our national weeklies carries no liquor advertising, another had ten pages of liquor "ads" in an issue just before Christmas. Such "ads" bring attractive inducements to drink into the home and are resented by many parents.

5. Local option is growing in many sections of our land and will continue to do so, especially in country districts, small towns, and better residential sections of the large cities.

6. Many people are of the opinion that law enforcement is not as strict as it should be.

7. There is too much advertising of beer and liquor on the radio. Parents do not care to have their children listen to the many spot announcements between radio programs in which the merits of "Dachshund" beer or some other brand are extolled in glowing terms.

No doubt our readers can add other points, but these are sufficient to show how many people feel on the liquor question. They are among the reasons why, as Dr. Gallup's poll shows, the dry sentiment in our country is growing at the rate of 1% per annum—a growth that will, if it continues, in a few years make preponderant the anti-liquor sentiment in our nation.

Sun Spots and Democracy

WHAT totalitarianism can do to the pursuit of knowledge is vividly suggested by a letter which recently came into our possession from the Berlin publishing house of Velhagen and Klasing. An American research worker had translated into German a popular scientific treatise on geology and inquired of these German publishers whether they would be interested in its publication in Germany. Their reply contains the following illuminating sentence, "We must at present busy ourselves so completely with German productions that we cannot give further thought to foreign researches. . . . With German greeting. Heil Hitler!" There is no need to contrast this position with "the place in the sun" which Germany once held in the world of scholarship. But there does seem to be a growing need to urge those Americans to count the cost who in their desire to maintain the *status quo* appear ready to embrace even totalitarianism. We still refuse to believe, however, that in the United States our only choice lies between the twin evils

of communism and fascism. We oppose the effort of the extreme right to identify democracy with fascism as well as the effort of the extreme left to identify it with communism. When democracy is being waved like a flag by threatening breezes both from the right and the left, it may help us to keep our bearings, if we remember the definition of Robert Brown, the commuter-philosopher of Montclair, New Jersey: "Democracy—a three-point system for getting along together whereby everybody has a say as to how to do it, all agree to do it the way the majority decides, and the minority is guaranteed the privilege of saying, 'It ain't right'—lacking only one of which it isn't democracy."

Communism Among the Sophomores

THE report of the Dies Committee supplies unquestioned evidence regarding the infiltration of Communism into the high schools and colleges. No one can study the four volumes of testimony published by the Committee without being convinced, whatever one's preconceptions may have been, that the Committee "has got something there." The proof that Communists have worked into our American school system is very convincing. It calls to mind the report made by the State Board of Regents of Kansas University, which investigated the death of Don Henry, former student, who was killed when fighting with the loyalist army. We quote from the report:

"There was at Kansas University a Young Communist League operating secretly behind various false fronts. Evidence shows that in the spring of his first year he (Henry) joined the Young Communist League.

"The Young Communist League held meetings and was addressed by Communist organizers.

"Don Henry became president of the American Student Union as his designated function in the Young Communist League. . . .

"Don Henry became interested in the Red cause in Spain. He was furnished money, through Communist sources, to go to Spain."

He went and was killed.

Not everywhere does the propaganda fostered by the Third International work such tragic results. We have reason to hope that the infection wears off usually after the graduate has a job. Some of them take into later life the memory of asininities committed under the influence of propagandists. There is the "C?C" Club, whose existence was discovered at Oklahoma City. One of its commissars (the word has a definite Soviet flavor) is a chap of eighteen, a sophomore at the high school.

He was a member of a group of boys and girls who would go out into a secluded place in the country and then would talk atheism, sex, and bloodless revolution. The creed of the "C?C" Club envisages "a purely bloodless revolution to establish a new political and economic system in which all men would be issued cash certificates in like amounts which must be spent before the end of the year."

Some get shot, some get teched in de haid.

Adventure with a Needle

BEING without a wife on a recent rainy afternoon I decided to shorten that pair of trousers myself. After all, I've told that woman time and again—well, that's my affair. She's going to be sorry. I've got about fifteen minutes to spare, and I've always told her that she could keep up on her reading while she was just sitting there working with her hands. Here's a chance to prove a lot of things.

"The fundamental problems of metaphysics are *metaöntics* and *metanoëtics* . . ." The problem of threading the needle is fundamental to sewing. Ever since Mark Twain had Tom Sawyer, in girl's clothes, discovered as a boy by threading the needle like a poor male, the problem has been acute. You remember he said that a woman always backs her needle onto the thread. After experiment I'm definitely committed to the school of thought which pushes the thread into the needle.

"Whether we take these problems in their most abstract form or complicate them by bringing in the *good* and the *beautiful* . . ." The problem of the length of the thread is complicated by the amount of sewing you want to do. There are several schools of thought on this. The conservative group inches the thread along the cloth and then adds a foot for wear and tear. But it doesn't work. You always fall an inch short anyway. If I may presume to introduce a new method entirely and one which has infinite possibilities, I suggest dropping the spool and cutting the thread when the spool stops rolling.

". . . in either case we discover that the objective and subjective sides of the investigation are as inseparable as the two ends of a stick." The kind of stitch to be used is determined by whether your approach to the problem is objective or subjective, that is, whether you are interested primarily in getting the job done or in seeing that a good job is done. You will have to answer that question for yourself. In either case you will find that it is as insep-

arable as the two ends of the thread. But if you have taken an extra long thread to avoid threading the needle twice you must avoid getting the needle entangled in the curtains on the backward cast.

"It is impossible to investigate *being* without making assumptions about *knowledge* . . ." If the thread knots and won't go through the material, leaving something that looks like a radio antenna, reach for the scissors. Don't try to stitch back through the hole you came through. I tried that and it looked as if Aunt Dinah had another quilting party on my trouser leg. And don't overestimate the strength of those needles. They always break when tapped with a tack hammer to make them go through the pleats. A better way is to work the point through and then, gripping it firmly with a pliers, pull.

. . . "or to investigate *knowledge* without making assumptions about *being.*" Ouch! Mmmm, a needle point under the finger nail. Where's that first aid kit? Don't try to finish the job off in that cute way women have of stitching round and round. Tie a knot and trim the edges.

"The most natural order is to proceed from *knowledge* to *being* . . ." There, that's finished. One leg's a little longer than the other, and there's a suspicion of shirring on the outside. (Inventory: Assets: trousers shortened; half a page read. Liabilities: Two hours, half a bottle of iodine, three needles, one spool of thread.) I've always said that women didn't arrange their work efficiently.

Fundamental Relationships

The horse and buggy may give way to the high powered car and the candle to the electric light, but these changes do not change the principles by which men live in communities with each other. Their relationships do not vitally change simply because they now can listen to far-away voices over the radio, travel by air, conduct business by the telephone, get strawberries in January, and level cities with a twenty mile bombardment.—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

The PILGRIM

By O. P. KRETZMANN

"All the trumpets sounded for him on the other side"

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Silent Wednesday

HOLY WEEK. . . . The most important seven days in the history of man. . . . Although the exact sequence of events is not always clear to us, we can discern, even now, the straight lines of divine order. . . . Sunday: The garments in the dust—the Hosannahs as the prelude to the "Crucify." . . . Monday: Sermons with the urgent and heavenly note of finality—the withered fig tree—Caesar's coin. . . . Tuesday: The terrifying wrath of the Lamb over institutionalized and personal sin among the Scribes and Pharisees—the fire and color of His last sermon to the city and the world—the sureness of justice and the coming of judgment. . . . Night and prayer in the light of the Easter moon on the Mount of Olives. . . .

Wednesday is silent. . . . If anything happened, the holy writers have drawn the veil. . . . Everything that God could say before the Upper Room, had been said. . . . It was man's turn now. . . . Perhaps there were quiet words in a corner of the garden, both to His children who would flee and to His Father Who would stay. . . . Wednesday was His. . . . The heart of that mad, crowded, holy week was quiet. . . . Tomorrow the soldiers would come and Friday there would be God's great signature in the sky. . . . Thursday and Friday would belong to time and eternity, but Wednesday was of heaven alone. . . .

Silent Wednesday. . . . If our Lord needed it, how much more we whose life is the story of the Hosannah and the Crucify. . . . Time for prayer, for adoration. . . . Time to call the soul into the inner court and the garden. . . . In our crowded world we are lonely because we are never alone. . . . No time to go where prayer is the only sound and God is the only light. . . . We need more silent Wednesdays. . . . In the glory of the Cross above our dust our si-

lence can become purging and peace. . . . God speaks most clearly to the heart that is silent before Him. . . .

The Power and the Glory

A FEW caustic words. . . . Religiously, the most striking fact in the modern world is the wide contempt for the tenets and values of religion. . . . Undoubtedly some of the causes for the low estate of Christendom are to be found beyond the walls of the Church. . . . It becomes increasingly necessary, however, to point out that visible Christendom has been unusually successful in the past twenty-five years in drawing contempt upon itself. . . . There are the inanities of Modernism. . . . There are the stunts of publicity-hunting pulpiteers. . . . Beyond these obvious barnacles on the ship of the Church there are, however, more subtle reasons for modern man's contempt for organized religion. . . . Most tragic among these is the pathetic gratitude of churchmen whenever a figure prominent in world affairs throws a crumb in the direction of religion. . . . Witness the almost hysterical gratitude with which the work of Jeans and Eddington has been greeted. . . . Witness the sickly thankfulness with which we receive Adolf Hitler's grudging statement that he will not harm the Church. . . . Witness the thousand pulpits that comment enthusiastically on President Roosevelt's reference to religion in his address at the opening of Congress. . . .

We are tired of all that. . . . Christianity's claim on the heart of man does not rest on the approval of a few scientists and politicians. . . . God and Caesar have never been friends and never will be. . . . Where is the power and glory of the Church that goes its divine way with only passing attention to the tides that swirl about her feet? The majesty of our faith and hope does not depend on the approval of the kingdoms of this world. . . . The walls of the city of God need no scaffolding. . . . The Church does not need the judgment of the times in which she lives. . . . The times need the judgment of the Church. . . . It is time for us to see that.

The Sense of Wonder

IN A PASSING note last month we referred to the growing need for a return to the sense of wonder. . . . The lost art of becoming unused to things. . . . Big things and little things. . . . Example: In Spain Barcelona falls. . . . In Italy a man steps out on a balcony and receives the wild applause of a crowd for a victory in which only "Spanish" soldiers are involved.

. . . Somehow we seem to expect that. . . . Crass hypocrisy and brutality. . . . We have become used to it. . . . The most significant thing now happening in the world is the destruction of moral values, especially the regard for human life and the sanctity of the pledged word. . . . But we no longer wonder. . . . Time we begin again. . . . How? . . . The only sure way is a constant reading of the Holy Bible. . . . The more we see of God, the more we wonder about His goodness, His mercy, and His truth. . . . The more we see of God, the more we wonder about men. . . . All the wonder of the world is in those sacred pages —from the remembered sparrow to the atoning Cross. . . .

Notes on Education

AT FAMOUS old St. John's College at Annapolis a remarkable experiment in education is under way. . . . Our readers above thirty-five will remember the day when, under the influence of John Dewey, education was conceived as the natural drawing out of the personality of the individual. . . . This personality was always good. . . . Progressive education had no room for discipline. . . . Here, however, comes St. John's with a "New Program." . . . All the essential assumptions of progressive education are tossed into the Severn. . . . The "New Program" at St. John's has no electives. . . . It is not possible for a student to choose Pullman courses. . . . On the basis of one hundred world famous books the student is introduced to the greatness of human thought. . . . He must study Greek and Latin. . . . He must do laboratory work. . . . He must "take" mathematics. . . . "Note the "must." . . . Discipline. . . . John Doe does not tell the faculty what he would like to study. . . . The accumulated experience of the ages tells him. . . . We become enthusiastic when we read the words of President Stringfellow Barr in the January issue of *Progressive Education*. . . . "A college of liberal arts is not a department store open to customers. (If it is open to customers, it must install the elective system, for the customer is always right.) It is a hospital, in which a very terrible disease is treated, a disease that has ravaged mankind for centuries and that threatens to assume epidemic proportions in several European countries today. It is the disease of ignorance and stupidity, and good diet and hard exercise are indicated—intellectual as well as physical—if our colleges propose to check it at these shores. St. John's is that sort of a hospital, and the staff have decided that it is mock modesty for physicians to disclaim a knowledge of medicine and in-

vite the patient to choose his own medicine, according to color or taste, and that it is chicanery to offer the patient nothing more conducive to health than a good bedside manner. Instead, at the risk of appearing arrogant to their fellow-practitioners, they have decided to meet those professional responsibilities which educators assumed for centuries must be met, and to prescribe the cure, on the grounds that patients are free to go to another hospital if they lack confidence in the staff of this one."

Still at it. . . . What is an educated man? . . . Certainly not one who knows everything. . . . That is impossible. . . . It must be one who has developed an attitude of thoughtful curiosity over against the cumulative wisdom of men. . . . A respect for facts. . . . A willingness to think with the head rather than with the heart. . . . Perhaps every sound education should include a course in formal logic. . . . Next to religion this is our most adequate defense against the shouting of dictators and demagogues. . . .

Here is an analysis of a recent speech from the point of view of formal logic. . . . The speaker stated the problem. . . . He offered a hypothesis as a possible solution. . . . He asserted the hypothesis as true and substituted emphatic assertion for the laws of demonstration. . . . His words became meaningless and moved into an emotional and rhetorical realm. . . . A casual evening twirling the knobs of the radio will offer more samples if you need them. . . .

Still at it. . . . Take the matter of historical evidence. . . . Where is the line between fact and fiction? . . . A few years ago even the *Atlantic Monthly* was tricked into publishing a series of "newly discovered" letters exchanged by Lincoln and Ann Rutledge. . . . A fact is a fact, but the interpretation of it is always the result of individual bias and prejudice. . . . Perhaps when all is said and done, we may call a man truly educated only when he is properly humble in the presence of truth. . . . And when he goes down on his knees before divine truth, he is educated for heaven. . . .

A father expresses his courteous misgivings over some of the events that befall his progeny—

LETTERS TO MY CHILDREN'S TEACHERS

By E. SCHALLER

September 6, 1938

DEAR MISS WILTON:

THIS note accompanies my little boy as he fearfully makes his way into his first classroom. His name is Allison. I record it for the sake of the record, together with his age of five, because you will be able to draw neither item of vital statistics from him in the usual manner. He is not responsive to personal questions, apparently regarding them as irrelevant, immaterial, and prejudicial to his interests. In fact, he is responsive to no questions whatsoever. You will note that he has what is known as a classical poker face, and you will find that he lives up to it. I feel that this letter of introduction is therefore desirable, in that it will save you wear and tear and protect him from an embarrassing prelude to school life.

Allison is not a mute. When we listen to him as he engages his playmates in conversation, we are struck by the vocabulary he has acquired. Here and there we note a word which we must delete at once, because it is a stray expression which evidently drifted into town on the wings of a breeze which caught the corner of a mule-driver's mouth. But otherwise his range of English is quite normal for modern boys of his age, embracing airplanes, machine-guns, cops, bandits, oranges, radio, Christmas songs, and a few assorted Biblical expressions.

The trouble is that he feels repressed in adult company and has a distaste for the give and take of tête-à-tête. If the calling of hermits were less outmoded, he would

qualify easily for such a profession and would rise rapidly in its ranks. Unhappily that path is closed to him, since I understand that the Trappists are an exclusive body, and overly gloomy, a feature which does not match Allison's disposition. He is happy and gay, so long as he is not asked to make a contribution to the serious side of life.

Undoubtedly this phase of his character will be violently shaken now, because school is the very embodiment of the serious aspect of life. He senses this. I may confide to you that on registration day our family activity faintly resembled that of the crew at a round-up where mavericks are caught and branded. Allison rebelled, silently but definitely, and evaded the school door twice before he was finally halter-broken and booked. You will find that, for the first at least, he will consider himself present under duress, a guest only, not subject to the same duties as the other pupils, merely the victim of a transitory whim on the part of his parents, aided and abetted by yourself. How you will resolve his individualism into a cooperative pattern remains your problem, but we pledge our every support and help to achieve this transformation. Since we have known him intimately for several years, we may be able to influence him slightly.

Very sincerely yours,
ALLISON'S FATHER

September 20, 1938

DEAR MISS RUTGERS:

You will forgive, I am sure, this effort to share with you my views on a certain department of your curriculum, inasmuch as you are the instructor of my fifth-grade son.

After a few days of the new term Jonathan began to take what for him is an abnormal interest in the question of his bodily immaculateness. He apprised me of the fact, and was seconded therein by his younger brother and sister, that a forceful code had been enacted at school, a Magna Charta of cleanliness, including a preamble of some kind and four Amendments which, when chanted, would be an asset to any cheer-leader's repertoire: Clean hands, clean face, clean ears, clean teeth. The provisions of this edict of purity are, I am assured, diligently enforced through rigorous daily inspection of the salient physiological appurtenances. Hence it behooves all children, unless they are ready to lose scholastic standing and sacrifice educational credits, to effect timely ablutions and tooth-brushing drills.

While I am not quite reconciled to the widely accepted principle that cleanliness in the physical sense is next to godliness, I do revere cleanliness and encourage it in my children. It does not follow, however, that I welcome the introduction of a sanitation probe into

our school. After all, cleanliness is a deeply personal thing, and its promulgation I have always regarded as a matter of home training and parental responsibility. In exceptional instances, no doubt, public officials must address themselves to the question for the sake of the public welfare. The inspection of ears and teeth in houses of correction, asylums, and in certain schools drawing upon slum districts for their clientele might well become a measure of self-defense, and include not merely the ears, teeth, and neck, but head and feet as well. But those problems seem rather foreign to our community.

If a child in school is obviously and distressingly dirty, a little water, soap, and admonition privately administered would alleviate the situation. From such individual corrective treatment it is a far cry to the systematized and sloganized regimentation of the Public's children into practical hygiene which gives the State parental responsibility, subjects the child to humiliating inspection, and offers him debatable opinions as commandments in the law of the living.

For example, tooth-brushing. I seek authority for the proposition that, if my son does not brush his teeth, à la Dr. West and Pepsodent or in any other way, he sinks in the social level and should lose academic standing. Certain advertisers would welcome that type of voluntary propaganda; but I seek evidence that my son should brush his teeth for any reason, except upon the advice of my own physician. Perhaps he has pyorrhoea or acid-mouth, and presents an individual problem with which I, not the school, must cope. But it is a well-known fact that the theory of tooth-brushing is a theory, not a doctrine, that many dentists question its value and some suspect it of harmful effects. My children do not know this; they know only that their school has spoken, and they are faithful repositories for dogmatic proclamations. Since salt, baking soda, and chalk are not delectable materials, I must buy them in costly disguises because my children lose credits in school if I do not.

Undoubtedly my son at times arrives in school with ears that are not above reproach, or acquires them very soon after leaving the house; but I sincerely hope and believe that they never reach the stage of intolerable offensiveness. If ever you feel that they do, a note to that effect promptly delivered to my hand would receive immediate and emphatic attention. But I do not send him to school to acquire a passing grade in aural purity, nor to gather for his life-time a hoard of ear credits. Counting the bristles in his toothbrush would more nearly approximate the type of practical education which I hoped to obtain for him at school.

If you, as well as the other instructors, will consider leaving that phase of his upbringing in my hands and concentrate upon imbuing him with a well-balanced regard for the Map of Africa and the beauties of the English language, I shall feel that you have been lending your skill and efforts to the best advantage, and you will find me grateful for your attention to that portion of my child's upbringing which I have allotted to you.

Respectfully yours,
JONATHAN'S FATHER

October 3, 1938

DEAR MISS RENFEW:

The new school year is a month young, and it has been a month of readjustments for parents, teachers, and pupils, all of whom are in their respective and peculiar manner affected by the transition from the summer doldrums into a new period of educational history. The effect upon teachers and children will be well understood by you and needs no elaboration here. But, as a parent, I assure you that the launching of their children into the deep of a new course of study in a new grade under a new teacher is not a matter of indifference for thinking fathers and mothers.

Our children bring home vivid and intense reactions to the personality of the teacher and to the resounding blows with which the first foundations of a new wing in the house of their education are driven firmly into their consciousness. By sheer pressure of their intensity, if not by choice, we are compelled to live through the first month, at least, of their new school year with our children; and it happens sometimes that we are a little disturbed by the direction into which their training appears to be tending.

Under your tutelage my daughter Anne has begun her second year. She is only seven, but she is more conscientious, perhaps, than her older and younger brothers. Now that I look back, it seems to me that the days of her first weeks in school have shown themselves dedicated to the proposition of guiding her into architecture and landscaping as a future profession. During her first year she prattled about sand-tables and nursery rhymes, and we took that as a matter of course, because first-graders are notoriously addicted to such things and must be weaned from them surreptitiously.

But now she is coming home, sometimes wild-eyed and sometimes starry-eyed, with insistent demands for pictures of houses, brick, stucco, or frame (she knows the terms), and with insatiable craving for card-board, glue, paste, colors, and dimensions. Her life seems to be filled with glorious phantasmagoria of cup-boards,

bird-houses, and neatly decorated interiors. When I suggest spelling, or numbers, or reading, she gazes dully at her father with just that dash of sympathy which reduces him to his proper place as a Victorian relic who will not permit the musty educational ghosts of yesteryear to rest. There was a time, she seems to say, when those pathetic means to knowledge were the bane of school-days; but this is the era of the liberated child. Houses, now, with Venetian blinds and Old English gables, three-ring binders filled with clippings of colored advertisements.

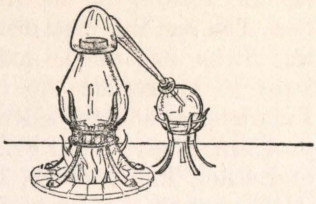
Now it is entirely possible that Anne in her maturity will present the world with a feminine counterpart of Norman Bel Geddes. She may, in fact, become famous on two or three continents for her exquisite models of wall-paper designs. But the problem of her specialization has not begun to trouble me, and if you were to put me to the question, I would admit that a career as a house-wife and mother would adequately reward my fondest ambitions for her.

My plan in sending my daughter to grammar school restricts itself to the purpose of having her taught the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic. That is terribly old-fashioned, I know. While as a Pastor I am an educator, my methods have the odor of the pyramids about them, and you can easily visualize my mental picture of school by simply filling in the slender grace of a birch-rod and the equally painful outline of a heavy tome callously imprinted: GEOGRAPHY. Modern education has shed these medieval vestments. You will tell me that children now acquire the same elementary knowledge without realizing it, inhaling facts through the purifying screen of manual training, art designing, and poring over an ad of Campbell's Soups. Perhaps; I devoutly hope so. I wish Anne would begin very soon acquiring a little of that knowledge through said screen. She just this moment arrived home, proudly bearing as her morning achievement two new creations of colored paper: A fire-place, and a soap-pipe surrounded by octagonal bubbles. I would hate to ask her how much are two apples and seven apples. Would she know the multiplication table of two, do you think? That little dab of practical information has stood me in good stead throughout the years. But I don't suppose Anne will ever have to learn it.

How happy I would be if she came home one night, climbed on my lap, and asked a question beginning with: Daddy, if I have seven marbles, and the teacher takes two away. . . .

Cordially yours,

ANNE'S FATHER



THE ALEMBIC

By THEODORE GRAEBNER

"The world cares little for anything a man has to utter that has not previously been distilled in the alembic of his life."

HOLLAND, *Gold-Foil*

I take it back. My criticism of the Milan Cathedral, my denunciation of it as an architectural monstrosity—I take it back. Not that it will mean anything to the architect who designed it back in the 14th Century, nor to the citizens of Milan, nor to anyone but myself. Not that I have found it necessary to reconsider the standards on which this criticism was based—certainly not. Milan is much too wide to be Gothic; it has no tower; it has instead a forest of marble pinnacles and finials crowning every vertical line, two thousand pinnacles in all, and hundreds of them bearing each a statue. Does this spell Gothic? Does it even spell good taste in architecture? And because my premises were right, I insisted on the conclusion. And now I take it back. You see, I have never seen the cathedral, have never been in Milan, and I reasoned from abstract premises. But friends of mine have seen the great Duomo, and there is no disagreement among them at all: the cathedral is a wonder. It is grand and magnificent beyond the power of words to describe. It is overwhelming. It is supremely beautiful whether you see it as a snow-white cloud across the hills from a distance or whether you stand close by and look upward at its marble spires and buttresses—there is nothing like it in all this wide world. My premises were right, my conclusion was wrong, and I take it back.

Confession is good for the soul, and it is just as well that I make my apologies to two notables who are likewise far beyond the possibility of disturbance through carping criticism, and who can derive no satisfaction from being vindicated. I have in mind John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress,* for one. Unquestionably, because he is a Baptist, his alle-

gory of the Christian faith and life must reflect the peculiarities of the Baptist communion. He has, of course, used such opportunity as presented itself, to emphasize immersion as preferable to any other mode of baptism. Being a Baptist he could not deny himself that privilege. And he would show either a tendency to Calvinism or to some other heresy, depending upon the type of Baptist faith he represented. This had all been so definitely associated in my mind with the *Pilgrim's Progress* that I did not so much as read the book until well past thirty years of age. This *is* a confession. No one who has attained his eighteenth year and has a knowledge of the English language should need to confess that he has not read *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is a masterpiece of imaginative writing, and no one should be considered well educated unless he has read it. But here I was, on the shady side of the thirties, when I first read *Pilgrim's Progress*. How much I would have missed, had I read all else that is good in English literature and had I overlooked this masterpiece with its haunting cadences, its marvels of suspense and climax—yes, and its Christianity pure and undefiled. For such is its content and teaching, and my earlier prejudices based on unimpeachable logic had no foundation in fact. Don't try to explain that.

Then there is Merle d'Aubigné and his *History of the Reformation*. You see, this man d'Aubigné was Swiss Reformed, and for a Swiss to appreciate the German Reformation and for a Reformed professor to give a fair evaluation of Luther, his theology, and his work—that was, of course, out of the question. Here was another first-rate production in the field of literature, the only history of the Reformation which has been translated into every language of Western Europe, but one which would naturally reflect the author's Reformed theology in the relation of state and church, the sacraments, and so on. It was through a study of Reformed opinions concerning Luther that I began to read the masterpiece of d'Aubigné and recognized not only the warmth and charm of its recital, but its enthusiasm for the leaders of the Reformation, the author's sound comprehension of what belongs to the sphere of the church and of the state, his sane judgment regarding Zwingli and his political exploits—he is actually ashamed of the mode of Zwingli's death (on the field of battle) his utter fairness in describing the controversies of Martin Luther, and his many tributes to the Saxon monk as the great genius of Protestantism, the hero of the Reformation. Hm.

"The power of capital letters to turn thinking awry" is the subject of a fascinating chapter in Henshaw Ward's book, *Builders of Delusion.* Mr. Ward points out "that the human mind has always been, and is now, deluded by words which are assumed to have a meaning that deserves capital letters, but which, when defined, are seen not to have any meaning." As examples of such words he cites PUBLIC, SPIRIT, JUSTICE, EDUCATION. Devotion is paid to these words "as irrational as the worship of Great Diana of the Ephesians," says Mr. Ward. It would be easy to write five pages of Alembic on the illustrations which might be supplied for his criticism of the popular use of DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM, THE ABUNDANT LIFE, CAPITALISM, and many other terms which everybody uses, on which everybody builds judgments that seem to them and to millions unimpeachable, and which not one person in a thousand can properly define. One might even say that the delusion worked by these words in capital letters depends upon an agreement that no attempt shall be made to define them.

Closely related to these big meaningless words are those general judgments, based on preconceived notions, of which a few samples have just been given but which should include half the prejudices, the unfair denunciations, and the offenses against reality of which we become guilty in our lives. And let no one say that we have at least derived from such blind antagonism the satisfaction of having fought for absolute righteousness. Once we properly understand, there is no satisfaction at all in fighting windmills or in strewing the arena with the remains of some scare-crow built up out of the blind partialities, the dogmatic misconceptions, the fixed ideas, and the pedantic notions which we permit to rule our minds.

There was Billy Sunday. I cannot mention his name now in class without causing a certain amount of merriment which, I am afraid, sometimes becomes audible because of a conviction that it is the expected thing. Somehow the legend persists that Billy Sunday—I am sure the "Billy" has something to do with it—was a mere buffoon, a clown in the pulpit, a sensational revivalist whom Providence had intended for a comedian, but who etc., etc. I am not so sure that if I went back twenty years I could not dig up some judgments of my own along much the same line to make my face red for the simple reason that I have since heard and seen the evangelist. I have seen him

take off his coat, mount upon a chair, and thence upon a table. I have heard him excoriate vice in language that made use of slang (and that made sin real to people whom you or I could never reach with our Addisonian phrases). But he was not a clown. He was not funny. People laugh at clowns; people laugh at comedians. No one laughed at Billy Sunday. His extravagances of action and language were due to a most extravagant, a transcendent, matchless love for sinners. You who have not heard him will not understand. And you have never learned what emphasis is in public speech. You would probably not agree with some clergymen of my faith who heard him, at a ministerial alliance dinner, a testimonial dinner to Rev. Sunday, flay for the space of half an hour the modernists who made up three-fourths of his audience, in language that flowed from "a tongue touched by the avenging angel," a most magnificent display of mastery of English and oratorical powers.

They used to tell me that Catholic peasants trying to portray the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ would be guilty of an offense against everything that is holy. Oberammergau, — another name for sacrilege, if not for blasphemy. A Bavarian wood carver, Catholic at that, representing the Apostle Peter, another John, another our Lord Himself! One cannot, possibly, quote Scripture against such impersonation: but whose Christian sentiment does not rebel against such dramatizations, against making a spectacle of the Death on Calvary? Answer—the Christian sentiment of those who have been there. I have never, these thirty years, heard any tourist, returned from Oberammergau, speak anything but words of commendation for the greatness, the solemnity, of the Passion Play.

One might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb. After Oberammergau, the *Ten Commandments*. Some of you remember this film. It was a sensation in the early twenties. The very title made some of us bristle with indignation. Screen a picture of the most tremendous scene pictured in Bible History—the giving of the Law on Sinai? Must these lords of the industry stop short of no sacrilege in their greed? What an insult to religious sentiment! I can still remember the resentment we worked up in our moral nature, the bitterness—a Jew-controlled industry showing its ungodly spirit, etc. Until one evening, after an Intersynodical Committee meeting in Chicago, we went to see the Ten Commandments. It contained not one scene unfaithful to the Bible Story, or anything in any way derogatory or offensive. Our mind set, as it was, to view a

film for the purpose of "burning up" the industry in an editorial, we followed the picture to its close—a preaching of the Law in all its terribleness, the mysteries of Election and—of course this could not be, in a Jewish production (we all said), but *it was* (we agreed)—the salvation from sin through the love of Jesus Christ. His form, acknowledging the penitent sinner—with the organ background of *Rock of Ages*. Very inappropriate in a theater—unless you can remember that Christ can rule among His enemies. All wrong—unless you saw it.

Then the Heavenly Fish Fry. When a colored boy of the deep South wants to picture to himself the very essence of happiness, he thinks of a fish fry. When a boy of 1536 in Saxony thought of the ultimate of happiness, he thought of a street fair. Luther pictured heaven to little Johnny in a letter detailing the joys of the supernatural world as a glorious street fair. Of course, this was all right. He was Doctor Martin Luther. But along comes the author of *Green Pastures,* looking through the eyes of a colored child, showing a crowd of happy negroes at a fish fry, saints with harps, angels floating on clouds of cotton, etc. Yes, and de Lawd as a fine gentleman, in a long black coat, and Noah's sons checking up on the animals entering the ark—in alphabetic order, as a child would do. You will say, "But *you* understood the idea of the producer; others would simply laugh at its incongruity." Of course, they would. They had to—logically. Only *No One Did,* from the beginning of the play to the end—no one, and the average mentality was probably 13, as usual. The lesson of the film: Man's need of redemption, the need of God Himself becoming one of mankind and suffering with them—from the ramparts of heaven a glimpse of three crosses on a hill—and the musical background—Salvation through the Atoning Blood.

But how can that be? Well, it is. And as for my outraged exclamations at the idea of the film, when sketched to me—I take them back. You will do as I first did—if you haven't *seen Green Pastures*—if you deal with presumptions, based on general judgments—which are mental processes, but never, never reality. And because we cannot divest ourselves—try as we may, experience whatever we may—of our prejudices, our belief in Capital Letters—we shall make the same mistakes in the future and condemn on general principles, only to be taught by experience and to be compelled to take it back—if we are honest.

An Argument with a Critic of the Drama supplies me with another illustration of the same human failing. We discussed, of all things, the art of Charlie Chaplin, and I remarked that I was not interested in Chaplin for two reasons—the unsavory details of his divorce, and his reputation as a coarse, custard-pie-throwing comedian.

"You assume," said my friend, "that an actor whose life has been scandalous will, of course, introduce salacious scenes and actions into his performances?"

"I should think so, if the man or woman is consistent." Followed a lecture on the strange inconsistencies of actors, some of whom are identified with immoral plots and action, while their personal lives are without a breath of scandal, or *vice versa*. As for the *vice versa*, he mentioned Chaplin.

"Charlie Chaplin has never appeared in a play that involved the slightest touch of obscenity or was suggestive in any way, whether as to plot or detail."

I don't know the Chaplin repertoire and shall permit the reader to think as he may please about this judgment. But my friend, the Critic—and he has a right to spell his title with a capital C—elucidated the place of Charlie Chaplin in the field of play-acting. As far as I remember, this is what he said:

"Mr. Chaplin is probably the greatest pantomimist in the world. He is one of the three or four greatest living actors. He has not played in rough comedy since the early twenties. He is a genius as a playwright. His latest ' (then)' film, *City Streets,* is Shakespearean in its combination of pathos and humor, in the perfection of its plot; and the last few scenes of the play are probably the greatest achievement in the motion picture art since its very beginning. Do you know that Alexander Woollcott said in a radio broadcast—and he was not advertising any films—that he had seen only six films all his life, and five of these were *City Streets?*"

I have never been interested enough to back this opinion of my Critic of the Drama against the opinion of others. But if he is right, then some of my readers will have to say—I take it back.

If I must make the idea I am trying to put over walk on all fours, here it is: Distrust abstract principles; have no faith in Capital Letters; see for yourself before you award blame or praise; and be guided by no one's judgment but your own. Be fair to yourself. And be fair to others.

MUSIC and Music Makers

By WALTER A. HANSEN

A Curious Description of the Playing of Fritz Kreisler Is Considered

The discussions of music and musicians with which *Time,* the weekly news magazine, regales its many readers are usually highly interesting even when they cause us to scratch our heads in utter amazement. Before me lies a copy of the widely circulated periodical dated December 12, 1938, and on page 46 I see an article dealing with the unannounced fiftieth anniversary of Fritz Kreisler's debut in the United States. To my consternation, I read the following cleverly worded pronouncement: "Kreisler's playing is to the exact, nervous fiddling of today what a Kentucky colonel's drawl is to the feverish staccato of a prizefight announcer."

No keenly discerning listener will venture to deny that Kreisler is an individualist among the outstanding violinists of today; but the terse and somewhat sensational analysis of his artistry offered by *Time* must, I believe, appear even to the most kindly disposed commentator to spring not so much from a desire to hit the nail squarely on the head as from an itch to print something which will be likely to attract widespread attention. It must be conceded, however, that such statements are not altogether without value. They provoke thought. They stir up arguments and arouse comment.

The consideration of a verdict so strange in its implications prompts your commentator to seat himself before his patient little typewriter for the purpose of tapping out a brief discourse on the artistry of Kreisler; and, as he begins to peck away at the keys, a host of thoughts and adjectives passes in review before the eye of his mental apparatus. How shall he start? What salient characteristics of the great musician shall he stress? What are some of the qualities that have elevated Kreisler to a place of conspicuous eminence among the widely known violinists of our time?

Suddenly, like the *deus ex machina* on the stages of the ancient Greeks, there sounds forth on the surface of the writer's memory the

gist of a brief and unsigned book review which came to his notice a long time ago. Here, he knows, is a point of approach. He remembers that he clipped the little article—but did not read the book—and tucked it away somewhere. So he hurriedly rummages about among many odds and ends, and, thank fortune, his scurrying is soon rewarded.

A well-known novelist by the name of Arthur Somers Roche had given birth—so the pungent review declares—to a volume in which he tried to peer into some of the workings of the human mind. He had called the product of his imaginative powers *What I Know About You,* and in it he had set forth the quaint deduction that "members of any particular species do not vary, save in a faint degree." He was thoughtful enough to admit that there are differences, but concluded that these are of no great consequence. According to his ruminations, they are nothing more than "recognition points, like the numbers in convicts." Stuff and nonsense! As though a comparison of the magnificent artistry of Kreisler with the equally magnificent playing of Jascha Heifetz would not reveal differences that are unmistakably fundamental in character!

A similar bit of warped armchair wisdom has been put into the mouth of one of the characters in Turgeniev's *Fathers and Sons.* There we read: "All people are like one another in soul as in body—the slight variations are of no importance. A single human specimen is sufficient to judge of all. People are like trees in a forest. No botanist would think of studying each individual birch tree."

Slight variations! Recognition points! Like numbers in convicts! What utter drivel about the many kinds of personalities that make up the human race! When a commentator sets himself the task of discussing the achievements of a master of Kreisler's stature, he must consider traits and characteristics which are infinitely more far-reaching than mere recognition points. According to the vapid theorizing of the author who spawned the notion expressed in *What I Know About You* and in conformity with the curious philosophizing of Basarov, who lifts up his misguided voice in Turgeniev's fine work of art, Kreisler and Joe Louis, Sir Neville Chamberlain, Adolf Hitler, Dorothy Thompson, Arturo Toscanini, Sigmund Freud, Haile Selassie, or a Chinese coolie would, one supposes, not vary "save in a faint degree." Color, specific gifts and abilities, as well as undeniable accomplishments, would, forsooth, be mere recognition points! How greatly the study of the arts would be simplified and how distressingly boring it would become if

such unspeakable buncombe were founded on truth! In that case, we should need little more than carefully compiled catalogs and card-indexes.

Fooled the Savants

Shall we say that the super-violinist who fooled the savants of several continents by palming off on them no less than fourteen of his own compositions as works written by acknowledged masters of the past is not one of the mighty geniuses of the present time? Shall we be so obtuse as to declare that this colossal accomplishment is nothing more, indeed, than a mere recognition point, like the number given to a convict?

Time may describe Kreisler's violinism as "leisurely, charming, old-school"; it may use "a Kentucky colonel's drawl" as a point of comparison when it speaks of the manner in which his performances differ so radically from what it calls "the exact, nervous fiddling of today"; it may remind us that Mrs. Kreisler once said that her husband would be a better violinist if he practiced more; but the fact remains that there is potent magic in the playing of this truly great apostle of beauty. His art is profoundly moving. He stirs our minds as well as our hearts. He is neither the most skillful technician of our age, nor can his playing be called note-perfect. His intonation is not consistently beyond reproach. Yet Kreisler has qualities which many another prominent violinist would give his right eye to possess—a personality which commands respect bordering closely on veneration, truly extraordinary scholarship, and the ability to invest his readings with a character which is at once illuminating and penetrating. Shall we call him one of the great humanizers in music? Much froth has found its way into his programs; but so powerful is the witchery which guides his fingers and his bow-arm that even trifles, when played by him in his own inimitable manner, seem, for the nonce, to have lost a goodly portion of their inherent insignificance. No age is blessed with many musicians of the intellectual stature of a Kreisler.

Here is an artist who discourses on his violin as one having authority, and not as the fiddlers—the world is full of them—who have the effrontery to rush in where angels fear to tread. It is evident that Kreisler sees music as embodying a large amount of human culture and experience. He feels deeply when he plays, and, what is even more, he is gifted with the uncanny power to arouse a telling response in the hearts and in the minds of those who come under the puissant spell of his artistry. We are all acquainted

with the law of sympathetic vibration in physics. Something very much like this goes into effect when Kreisler works his sorcery on an audience. The light of a strange burning shines through his playing. His art tingles the spine. Is this but another recognition point? Is it comparable in any way to the drawl of a Kentucky colonel?

So What?

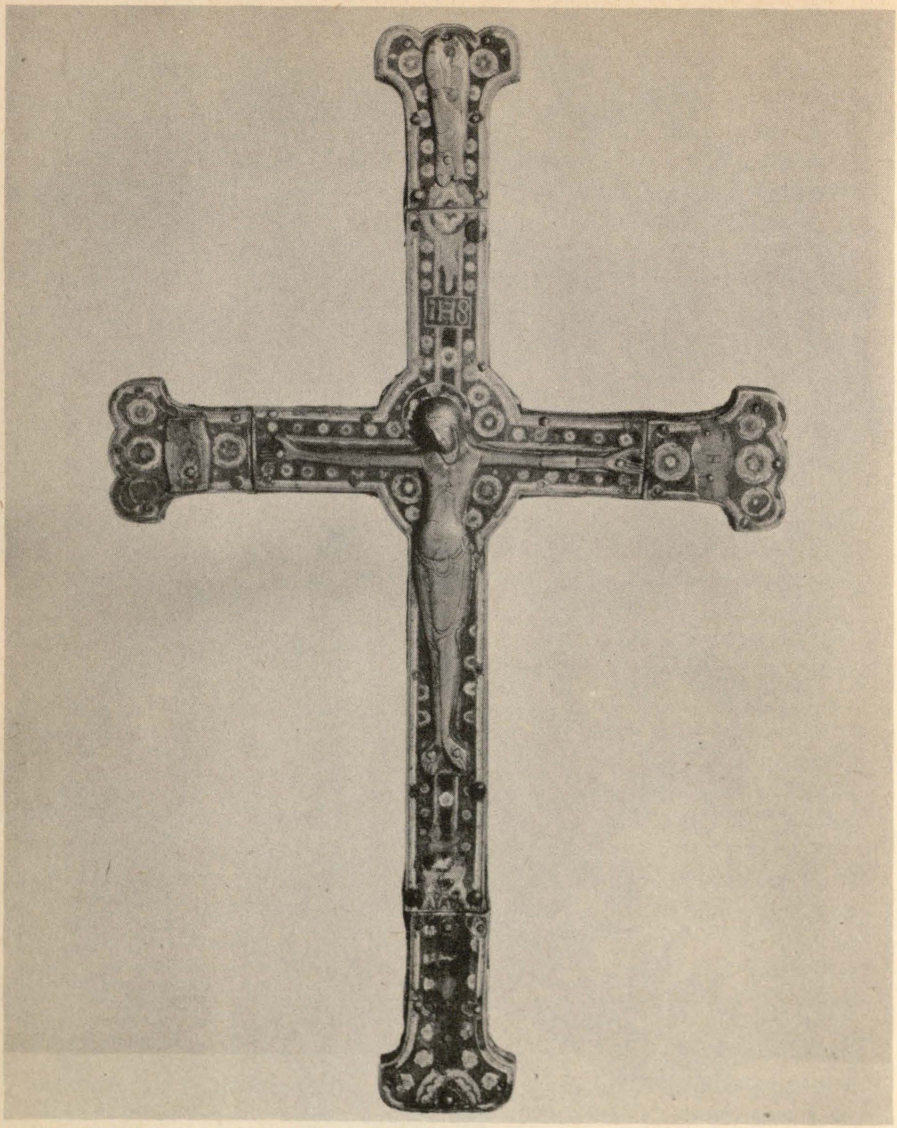
We know that Kreisler has never been a zealous champion of what is known as the modern idiom in music. The experimental and revolutionary tendencies evolved in recent years have struck no vibrantly responsive chords in his heart. In this respect, he is radically different from an artist like Joseph Szigeti. He belongs to another school of musicians. Like Paderewski, Rachmaninoff, Josef Hofmann, Moritz Rosenthal, and many others, he prefers to stand calmly by while those who are so inclined sally forth to break lances and smash heads in an effort to explore the many and manifold possibilities of tonal expression. Perhaps he is bored by the ventures of the modernists and puzzled by their gropings. It may be that he is often disgusted by what they do. At any rate, he is not one of them.

Shall we condemn Kreisler for his attitude toward modernistic trends in the art of tone? Shall we denounce him because many of his programs have seemed to give evidence of a far deeper interest in some popular trifles of recent vintage than in the strivings and searchings of those who believe and are sure that, to this day, no composer, however great, has ever succeeded in speaking the last word in the matter of form harmony, melody, rhythm, and counterpoint? The answer to our questions is: The world of music needs men like Kreisler, just as it needs men like Szigeti. The classics are here to stay, and artists equipped with Kreisler's ability to expound their beauty and their significance have always been few and far between. His eloquent espousal of certain inherently worthless baubles is not entirely without its redeeming virtues, because it proves conclusively that not even *his* glorious artistry will avail to elevate frothy concoctions like the *Indian Love Call* to a place of lasting importance in music.

Time's reference to the drawl of a Kentucky colonel may have some point and pertinence when we speak of Kreisler's delivery of Rudolf Friml's flimsily gelatinous and irksomely cloying brainchild; but the remark becomes ridiculous in the extreme when we consider what wonders the mighty violinist is able to work when he

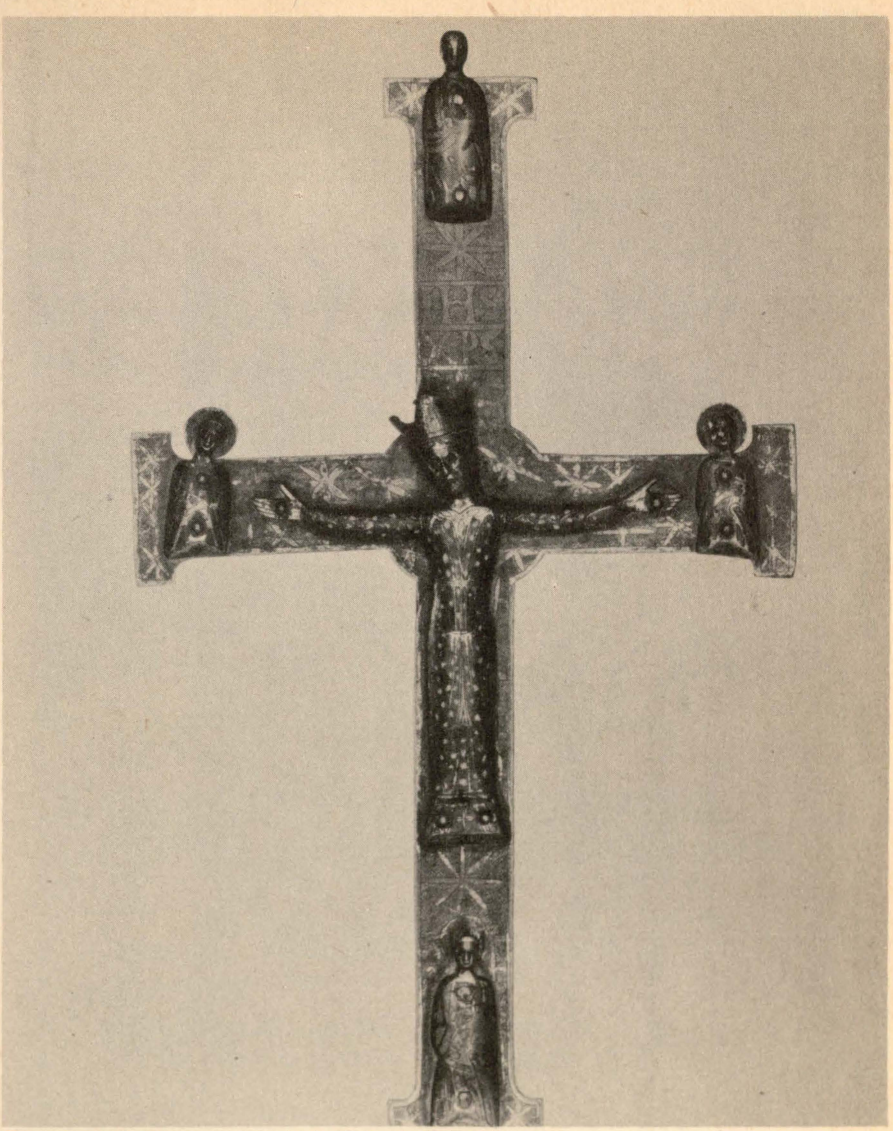
Courtesy Le Louvre, Paris

A magnificent fragment of a crucifix in Saint-Mihiel's Abbey, executed in wood by Ligier Richier.



Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

The above processional cross dates from the XIII Century and was executed by the craftsmen of Limoges, France.



Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

F. R. Webber in his "Church Symbolism" pictures over one hundred forms of the cross which have been used in Christian symbolism. The cross here pictured shows the Crucified surrounded by the four Evangelists. It dates from the Limoges craftsmen of the XIII century. Note the robes of office for Christ, the High Priest.

Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

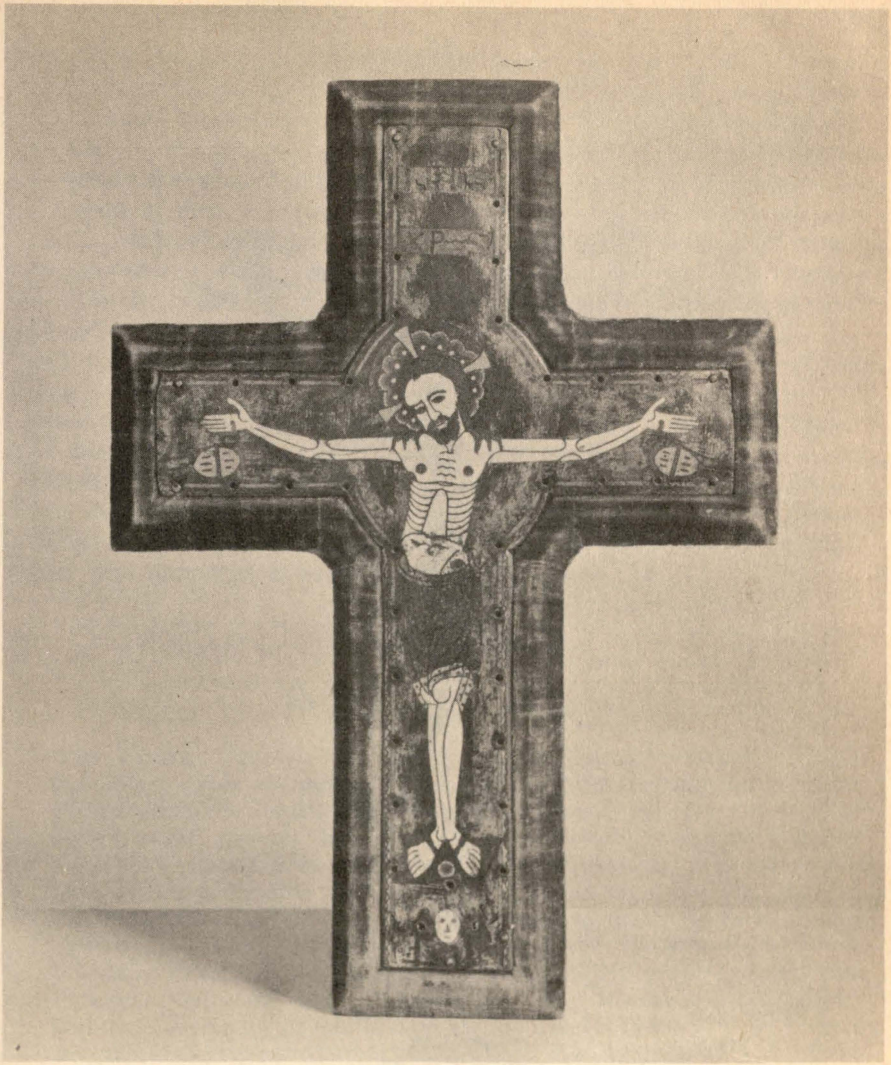
These two pages contrast book covers of French and Spanish origin in the XIII century. The above is of Limoges enamel and shows the Crucified with the Evangelists. The crown still remains but the robes of office have disappeared.

Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

This book cover of Spanish origin is of copper-gilt. Christ is shown with Mary and St. John, and two weeping angels above the cross. Notice the four types of halo.

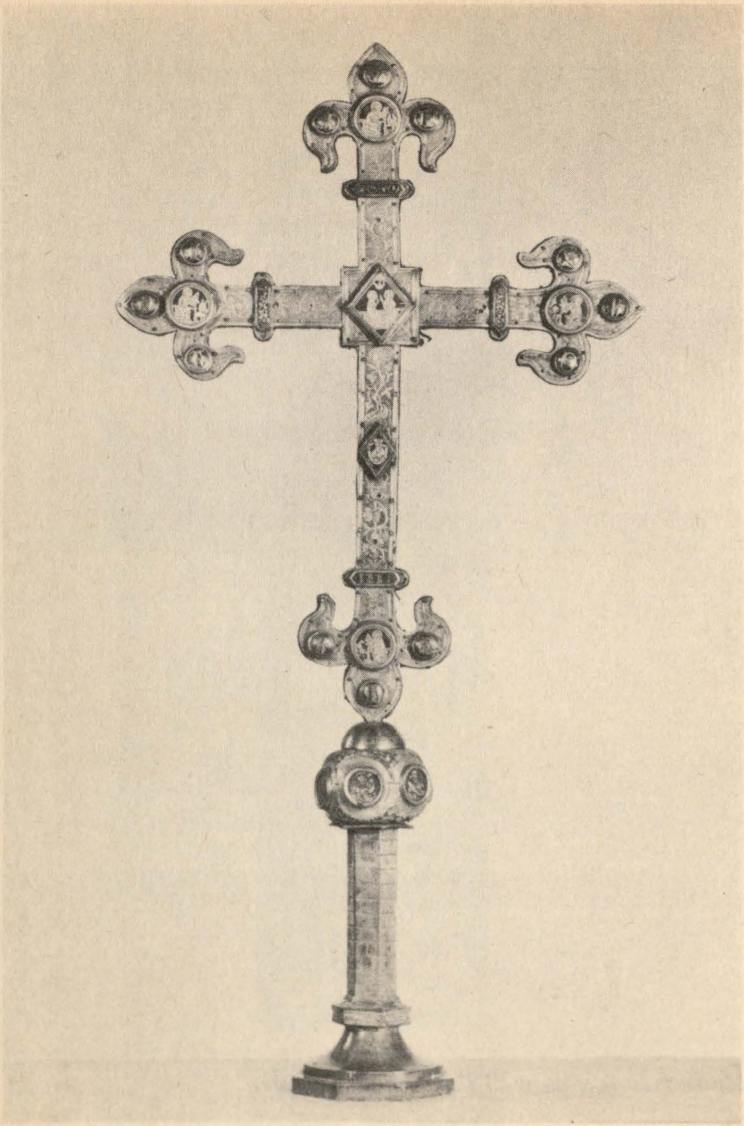
Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

A medallion from the Limoges Craftsmen of the XVI century. The medallion is only four inches in diameter but the figures are perfect in every detail. Notice that the robes and the crown have all disappeared and that the representation has become more naturalistic than symbolic.



Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

A crucifix of an entirely different type of XII Century French origin. The superscription is interesting because it is the same as that found on the cross in the third picture of this section and shows clearly that the often misinterpreted I H S is in reality nothing but the abbreviation of the name Jesus in the Greek.



Courtesy of the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

A German Processional Cross of the XIV Century most beautifully ornamented with brightly enameled medallions of the four Evangelists. Saint Matthew, on the left; Saint Mark, on top; Saint Luke, on the right; and Saint John, below. Oddly, also the superscription I N R I is placed at the base of the cross. The center medallion seems to represent the Coronation of the Virgin.

addresses himself to those unparalleled sonatas for the violin alone which Bach composed when he was in the employ of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Koethen. His readings of these unique masterpieces are scholarly and thrilling in spite of some false notes and an occasional straying from the straight and narrow path of purity in intonation. At the same time, the performances show us beyond question that the music of the immortals cannot be reduced to terms of an exact science like mathematics. We learn from Kreisler's playing that Bach is first and foremost a melodist—a melodist who, with all the marvelous texture of his dumbfounding polyphony, speaks *from* the heart and *to* the heart. Kreisler puts to shame those critics and criticasters who, out of the depths of strange prejudices, prate piously and volubly and self-complacently about what they are pleased to call the dullness of Bach.

Surely, this towering individualist among the great violinists of today is deserving of far higher praise than is locked up, so to speak, in so curiously disparaging a manner, in the queer effusion printed in the weekly newsmagazine, *Time*.

❖

Recent Recordings

DEEMS TAYLOR. *Through the Looking Glass.* The Columbia Symphony Orchestra under Howard Barlow.—Our country has every reason to be proud of the man who gave us this fascinating work. Columbia Album 350.

PETER ILITCH TCHAIKOVSKY. *Ballet: The Swan Lake.* The London Philharmonic Orchestra under Antal Dorati.—Thoroughly delightful music capably performed under a universally recognized master in the field of the ballet. Columbia Album 349.

NIGHTS AT THE BALLET. Selections from *Les Sylphides* (based on music by Chopin), Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake, Nutcracker Suite,* and *Fifth Symphony,* Rossini's *La Boutique Fantasque,* Ravel's *Bolero, Le Beau Danube* (based on music by Johann Strauss), *The Good-Humored Ladies* (based on music by Domenico Scarlatti), Delibes' *Coppelia,* von Weber's *Invitation to the Waltz,* Borodin's *Polovetsian Dances,* Stravinsky's *Petrouchka,* Manuel de Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat,* Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Scheherazade,* Schumann's *Carnaval,* and Bizet's *Jeux d'Enfants.* Played by a symphony orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr.—Another choice item for balletomanes. Victor Album C-30.

VERSE

Passion Pictures

PROLOGUE

Curtains of time,
Roll back
A hundred ninety decades
To a land about
To celebrate the Passover.
Reveal
A band of fishermen
And artisans led
By a hated Galilean –
A hated, humble Galilean,
Even now about to start
His final journey
To Jerusalem.

I

THE SOP

Gathering gloom in an upper room –
Shadows lengthening over
A long table. Twelve men sat
Partaking food and drink
In a final farewell supper
With their Lord. But
To only one the Master gave
The sop – he rose amid
Their wondering glance and
Went into the night –
Alone.

II

AGONY

"Father, if it be Thy will."
Out of the stillness of the black
Judean night rose high

This agonizing cry
From one lone Figure –
Bloody drops of sweat
Upon His brow –
Only the distant stars
Gave heed – disciples slept –
Until an angel came
To comfort Him.

III

THE KISS

On His cheek still stung
The symbol that through ages long
Betokened faithfulness and love –
But now debauched
By traitor's lips, as he,
Who had been trusted, did
Lift up his heel against Him
To implant it through
The medium of a kiss
Upon His sacred features –
To betray Him.

IV

"SPIT UPON"

The vain and tainted glory
Of a court whose hollow pomp
And splendor made but sickly bid
To former grand display in all
The power Annas could assert
Or Caiphas could muster.
The sad spectacle did end
In justice blinded, tilted scales,
And spittle – from the mouths
Of Roman soldiers and His own
Fanatic countrymen, whose hate
In idle jest found vent
On the meek figure
Of the Son of Man.

V

THE LOOK

A single, long, beseeching
Look
The Master gave. All Peter's
Breath
In one, long, shuddering
Sob
Was gathered. Far away
From the grey scene of his denial –
Shedding bitter tears.

VI

ECCE HOMO

"What is truth?" "Does not
This crown of thorns, this purple robe
Show kingship? But o'er what
Am I a King? Who my subjects are?
And what bounds do not divide
My kingdom from another's?"
Pilate took
Him to the howling rabble,
Washed his hands, exclaimed,
"Behold the Man!"

VII

VIA DOLOROSA

A trail within the stony dust
Marked but the passage of
A Malefactor bearing
His own cross upon a bleeding back.
The narrow city streets behind,
Before – the place of skulls –
Too far! His body sank beneath
The weight – a pilgrim
From Cyrene aided
On the via dolorosa.

VIII

MALEFACTOR

His arms in agony outstretched,
Cold metal nails into
His warm flesh tearing,
Yet he, a thief,
Deserving death, could cry
To Him, who innocent,
Did languish
In like pain beside him,
"Lord, forget not me when
Into Paradise Thou comest!"
And His Lord could answer,
"E'en today thou shalt with me
Forever live."

IX

DARKNESS AND DEATH

Darkness – the pitchy, Stygian
Black of death, of unforgiven sin,
Of pall and sorrow, midnight
Unrelieved of stars could
Not be blacker, yea, the very sun
His lustre lost, and earth,
Her bowels revealing, gave up
Dead long buried, for
The Son of God was dead!

EPILOGUE

This, the humble Galilean;
He, the Shepherd, Lamb in one,
Had now, too, become the scapegoat
As He, God and Man,
Took indignity upon Him,
Pain, scorn, and hate – and
All offences sin had brought,
And then – the sin itself!

Victor over death in death!
Conqueror of the grave!

Mightier than Satan's hell!
With power to save!

ANDRE DU CLOS

Fifth Horseman

In silence, and with bated breath,
He watched the spectral hand of death
Descend, and passing on he left
No heart to mourn, no soul bereft
Save one, the anguished heart of Him
Who died for him on Calvary's tree.

Alone he lived, and living gained
A golden treasure, crimson stained;
And added yearly to his store
In selling guns and arms for war.
Yet none will claim his diadem,
Or sing for him a requiem.

For every coin, a whitened cross –
The golden hoard became as dross
Like thirty silvered pieces paid
To Judas for our Lord betrayed.
To all the world, so long concealed,
A Fifth strange Horseman stands revealed!

WILLIAM H. DOLLINGER

Friendship

What noble thing you lay hold on
In my soul to love
I do not know nor comprehend.
Unless . . . you touch that thing
I want most to be,
And, having faith,
You love the dream,
Believing its fulfillment.

HELEN MYRTIS LANGE

Books—some to be read—some to be pondered—some to be enjoyed—and some to be closed as soon as they are opened.

THE LITERARY SCENE

ALL UNSIGNED REVIEWS ARE BY MEMBERS OF THE STAFF

Dostoevsky in Minnesota

WIND WITHOUT RAIN. By Herbert Krause. Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis. 1939. 364 pages. $2.50.

A FEW years ago the South had a monopoly on America's significant regional literature. Such writers as John Crowe Ransom, Jesse Stuart, Allen Tate, Ed Bell, Thomas Wolfe, Caroline Gordon, and William Faulkner were contributing to a remarkable renascence in American letters. Just before the South started booming, the Midwest startled the literary world by offering Sherwood Anderson, Ruth Suckow, Zona Gale, Theodore Dreiser, and Sinclair Lewis. The Midwest produced a Nobel Prize winner. Today rumors are flying thick and fast along the literary grapevines that the Midwest will again become striking literary pay dirt any moment.

Exhibit Number One would be Herbert Krause.

Wind Without Rain is a lengthy semi-autobiographical study of the Vildvogel family, its contacts with a peculiar rural Minnesota Lutheranism, its struggles with a harsh eighty-acre farm near Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and its conflict with the unpredictable elements of musical genius. The dominating character in the novel is Johan Vildvogel, who fled a northern Minnesota lumbering camp after a barroom brawl and then settled in the Loon Lake territory. He marries a gentle orphan girl. Four sons are born to the couple, Walter, Fritzie, Jepthah, and Franz. Johan Vildvogel is a harsh, cruel man, determined to twist a living out of his farm with the help of his boys. The entire family lives in a continual state of cringing fear of Vildvogel. Franz's burning desire to learn to play the violin is brutally crushed in the name of religion. Only after Vildvogel discovers that Franz can earn money playing at local barn dances does he relent. But he relents at the cost of a tortured conscience. In the midst of the hard labor of extracting a living out of the eighty and meeting bank note payments, Franz and Jeppy have a quarrel which ends in the permanent crippling of Jeppy, the narrator of the story.

Life in the Vildvogel home grows more unendurable with each year. At last Walter runs away. The father

rages in a futile manner. He works the other boys doubly hard. Franz, despite the grinding labor, is still determined to master the violin. Something indescribable and haunting seizes his soul every time he hears music. Mutterchen sympathizes with her son's aspirations. The years pass, and Franz achieves the rank of first fiddle at the barn dances. Mutterchen dies, worn out by toil and by her efforts to protect Franz from the unremitting fury of Johan. Johan Vildvogel is permanently crippled one winter. Franz marries Tinkla, the neighbor's girl. Tragedy still haunts the family, and it is only partly resolved by the death of old Vildvogel and the family's moving to a better piece of farm land. The fact still remains that the yearnings in Franz's soul remain unanswered. He is bound to the soil the rest of his life.

THERE are, of course, other characters in this long novel whose contributions toward the unfolding of the drama are decidedly important. Old Pastor Sunnenbaum, tyrannical, unbending, preacher of Law and Gospel, with special emphasis on Law, plays a leading part in the tortured drama of Johan Vildvogel's life. His sermons, his conduct of confirmation class, and his pastoral visits are not only highly interesting but highly significant in the development of the novel. Two girls, Liliem Schoen, whose end is pathetically cheap and tragic, and Tinkla Bauer, gentle and patient, turn Franz Vildvogel's life into a contradictory, puzzling tragedy. There are neighbors, the Prinzings, the Bauers, the Mais, the Klosters, and Alb Hukelpoke, whose lives are interwoven with the story.

The novel is not written in straight narrative form. The story is told by Jeppy Vildvogel as he lies in the hospital, where he has at last the chance to be under the care of a noted physician. The technique is ingenious; for Jeppy has an integral part in the story, and yet he is able to achieve the aloofness of a disinterested narrator. The grim drama unfolds as a series of recollections which are closely knit together because of Jeppy's part in the Vildvogel tragedy. The final result is that the novel has a finished construction remarkable in a first effort. Herbert Krause's first novel actually has, in his own words, woven "the singing pattern" which was back of his mind when he set out to write the Vildvogel saga.

There are some criticisms. Johan Vildvogel is, first of all, a stock character in the customary novel of the soil. His brutality is a trifle unnatural because the novelist failed to underline the drama back of Vildvogel's flight from the northern Minnesota lumber camp. He has something of the old Dostoevskian temperament which makes life a miserable, tortured search for spiritual peace. The Lutheranism in the novel is harshly Calvinistic. The reviewer willingly concedes that the Pastor Sunnenbaums were all too frequent in Minnesota pioneer days and even in the early part of the nineteenth century. The danger is that Mr. Krause resurrects a stock figure common in many types of satire. Pastor Sunnenbaum resembles the hell-breathing, relentless preacher of W. Somerset Maugham's *Rain*. Some of the scenes in the novel are amazingly violent although they

are not foreign to the mood and theme of the story.

Despite these strictures, your reviewer recommends this novel, enthusiastically and without reservation, as an exceptionally mature study of a family. It is an original contribution to American folk literature. *Wind Without Rain* is written in a hauntingly lovely prose that avoids the dangers of over-lushness but succeeds in building up the mood of the tragic story of pain and unfulfilled genius. Whatever shortcomings the novel may have, your reviewer, nonetheless, unhesitatingly commends *Wind Without Rain* to the Pulitzer Prize committee.

Herbert Krause was born near Friberg, Minnesota, and attended Park Region Academy at Fergus Falls, Minnesota. He was graduated from St. Olaf College in 1933 with a *magna cum laude*. While attending St. Olaf College he came under the influence of Dr. Spohn, who has done much to encourage young Midwest writers. In 1935 he received his Master's degree from the University of Iowa. He also attended the Bread Loaf School of English on a creative writing fellowship and won first and second place in the Midwest Folk Drama Tournament with the play, *Bondsmen of the Hills*. Mr. Krause is at present head of the English department at Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Very, Very, Very... British

ROYAL REGIMENT. By Gilbert Frankau. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1939. 532 pages. $2.50.

THIS novel comes laden with the lushest sort of blurbs. The lowly reviewer is made to feel very humble at opening the pages of this book which the author calls, "A Novel of Contemporary Behaviours." *The London Times* says that *Royal Regiment* is "as nearly perfect as a novel can be." The *Evening News* calls Mr. Frankau "one of the supreme story-tellers." The American publisher's blurb-writer has a go at lushness too. "Glamour and romance versus tradition and duty. . . . Two comrades-in-arms, a beautiful woman, the honour of the Royal Regiment, and the overpowering force of love."

Ah!

All we can do is to give you a few samples from a novel that will, undoubtedly, sell 100,000 copies before 1939 is very much older.

The blurb-writer: "Wealth of fascinating detail."

Sample: "I'm afraid I haven't prepared anything today," the village canon says as he begins his sermon. "As some of you will realize, I've had rather a busy week. But I've good news for you. We shall have our main water in the village before the summer; and by winter we should have our electric light. These benefits—I venture to suggest to you—are a reminder that God helps those who help themselves. . . . "

The blurb writer: "Glamour and romance."

Sample: "Two no trumps to you, Connie."

"Three hearts to you, Mabelle. Would you mind if I turned on the wireless?"

"Three no trumps. You shouldn't be such a gambler."

"Four hearts to you, Mabelle."

"Four no trumps."

Birmingham Post: "A suave, easy, sophisticated novel."

Sample: "How about tomorrow?"

"Not tomorrow."

"Why not?"

"Because you won't be up to it."

"The day after then?"

"But—"

"But me no buts."

Divorce and Pain

WISDOM'S GATE. By Margaret Ayer Barnes. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 1938. 370 pages. $2.50.

DIVORCE! The very sound of the word is as ugly as the miserable, disrupted relations for which it is a symbol. The prevalence of divorce in the modern world constitutes a threat, not only to society itself, but also to those who take this way out of their marital difficulties because it seems so easy, for the sufferings of the divorced are often intense.

How true this statement is is illustrated in Mrs. Margaret Ayer Barnes' latest book, *Wisdom's Gate,* a sequel to her Pulitzer Prize winner of eight years ago, *Yeare of Grace.* The two books picture the life of a family in a fashionable suburb of Chicago. In the first book, Cicily is married to Jack, her first cousin, at the same time that his sister is married to Bert; after ten years the two couples divorce and Cicily marries Bert. She thus becomes the wife of her ex-husband's sister's ex-husband, truly a complicated mess. *Wisdom's Gate* takes up their lives after the passing of five years. It is mainly the story of Cicily's struggles in the face of a looming second divorce and of her final solution of her problem.

Clearly and effectively, divorce is pictured as not the easy answer to marital strains, but as one with repercussions that are often tragic, not only to the lives of those directly involved in the divorce, but also to the lives of all other family members.

Like the skillful modern writer that she is, Mrs. Barnes refrains from injecting personal opinions on the subject and avoids any possible intimations of editorializing. Instead she teaches through the actions and emotional stresses of the characters themselves. For instance, the basic weakness of divorce as a solution for marital difficulties is expressed by Cicily's fifteen-year-old son after she has explained about her divorce and his stepfather. When she exclaims about the grave decision she made—"I staked my life on it"—he replies, "I really don't see why. You know what you said—love comes and it goes. If you believe that, I should think you would feel that there could always be another love."

That seems the crux of the divorce psychology. If one marriage doesn't succeed, divorce and try again. Keep trying: love is just around the corner.

Throughout the book there are such touches of human understanding as appear in the account of Cicily's dismay at the news of her ex-husband's impending remarriage. "It wasn't Jack's desertion from an ideal of barren constancy that had so upset her temper. She was only humiliated because doubly deserted." She was hurt because, after his "desertion" (when she had left him) he now refused to remain faithful to her

memory—a reaction typically feminine and human.

Cicily's slowly changing conception of divorce is shown—from "Divorce, in the abstract, had always seemed to Cicily civilized, practical, necessary, and humane" to "No good could come from leaving the man whom you loved. She would have to put up with it."

Granted that some marriages are the source of much personal tragedy, which would be alleviated by divorce, it still does not necessarily follow that the "old-fashioned" idea of marriage for "always" is wrong. A fine defense for mutual understanding, *Wisdom's Gate* may well be read by exponents of divorce as a presentation of the ideal solution for marital unhappiness.

GEORGE PETRICK

Education of a King

CRIPPLED SPLENDOUR. By Evan John. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. 1938. 575 pages. $2.50.

SCOTLAND'S royalty is one of the most fertile fields for the novelist searching for plots. Of all the European royal families, the House of Stewart is especially filled with murders, beheadings, and all the other trappings needed to make an exciting story. James Stewart, who ruled Scotland from 1424 to 1437, lived a life of splendor and tragedy. In those all too short twelve years of his reign he created a unified Scotland and made a formidable foe of England. In the midst of all this turbulence he was a poet, a musician, an avid reader, and, strangest of all, a faithful, devoted husband.

Evan John tells James Stewart's story in a well-written, highly moving novel. James Stewart was born in 1394, the second son of Robert III, King of Scotland. When his brother David was murdered in 1402, James was the next in line for the throne. He also became a marked man. His father sent him to France to complete his education and at the same time dodge assassins. On James' return home he was kidnapped by an English pirate crew and turned over to the London authorities. He was held as a valuable hostage for the next eighteen years of his life. During these years as a royal prisoner, some of them spent in the London Tower, he learned music, wrote exquisite poetry, and made half-hearted attempts to win his freedom. From a youthful, buoyant optimism, he gradually turned to a pessimistic fatalism. Worse yet, from a gallant, headstrong boy he turned into a wary, half-selfishly calculating king. Some of his generous impulses disappeared. But this degeneration, which set in during the last years of his imprisonment and continued during his years as king, was the result of the increasing weight of responsibility. James Stewart was determined to be a ruler in demonstrable fact.

While a prisoner in and about London he met his future wife, Lady Joan Beaufort. He almost lost her when the English kings took him along on their French campaigns. In those bloody battles he was forced to fight against some of his own countrymen. Although he hated war, yet he could exult in the mêlée of a bloodthirsty hand-to-hand battle. At last he was freed and allowed to re-

turn, rather grudgingly on the part of the English, to Scotland, his beloved country. Accompanying him on his journey home was his wife, the former Lady Joan Beaufort.

SCOTLAND, James discovers, has been ruined by the internecine warfare of the various clans. The Highlanders hate the Lowlanders. The leaders of a few clans have succeeded in monopolizing almost all the fertile acres of the country. Scotland is in truth being ruled by a collection of gangster chieftains. The next twelve years King James spends in establishing order in his native land by parcelling out to the poor land which he appropriates from the huge estates of the land-gorged Scottish nobility. He entrenches his house. He tries to establish a Scottish parliament. His progressive legislation antagonizes the leaders of the Scottish nobility. His insistence on strict justice for rich and poor alike is met with an astonished resistance on the part of the nobility. At the same time he fosters education, encourages the growth of St. Andrews, and tries to bring a more civilized way of life to the half-savage Scotsmen. His progressive legislation, his earnest attempts to introduce culture and civilization, at last begin to bear fruit. Then he is brutally assassinated in an abbey.

Here is one of those rarities: a historical novel, warm, alive, and thrilling. From first page to the last there is not one dull, unessential moment. Perhaps the most fascinating pages are those containing the story of the King's many years of imprisonment in England. He watches the intrigues between the House of Valois and the House of Plantagenet. He sees the seed of the future War of the Roses being sown. He meets Lady Joan Beaufort, a distant relative of John of Gaunt, and in the face of many discouragements finally wins her hand. Lady Joan was, in James' words,

> Beauty enough to make
> a world to dote.

She is throughout the novel an appealing, human figure. Her personal grief over the untimely death of her husband overwhelms the reader.

There are many other people in *Crippled Splendour* whose lives are closely intertwined with James Stewart's. There is Charles of Orleans, a fellow-prisoner with James Stewart in London, cynical, utterly bored with life, at last freed to return to France. One meets the Graham clan which, from father to son, is motivated by an undying hatred of James Stewart, who has robbed them of their lands. Robin Graham, the assassin of the king, emerges as a pitiful, misguided creature of his strong-willed father.

A novelist who centers his story around a known historical personage runs the danger of having his character emerge as the puppet of the author, who must propel the progression of known historical events. There are times, one feels, when Evan John did not escape this danger. But he succeeds admirably on the whole in writing about a king who grows mentally and spiritually, as he feels the increasing weight of the crown.

Here is a king who has written some of the world's finest, most touching poetry.

Ah, busy ghost, still flickering to and fro,
That never art in quiet nor in rest
Till thou returnest where thou camest fro'
Back to thy first, thy own and proper nest.

When he was King of Scotland he wrote this quatrain:

Be not too proud in your prosperity,
For as it comes, so shall it pass away.
You have short time to reckon on—for see
How soon the green grass turns to yellowing hay.

And on the night of his assassination he wrote these lines:

Since words are slaves and only Thought is free,
Keep thy tongue still, knowing what tongues can do,
Shut up thine eyes from this world's vanity—

In the spate of novels turned out every season, *Crippled Splendour* emerges as a novel far above the average. Every page engrosses the reader. It is not only well-constructed, but it is emotionally written, surely an important requirement for every good novel. Read *Crippled Splendour* on some of these long winter evenings. You will be shifted to another age, remote in years, but actually contemporary in its problems.

Time Brings all Things

. . . *AND TELL OF TIME.* By Laura Krey. Houghton Mifflin Co. 1938. 712 pages. $2.75.

AND tell of Time, what gifts for thee he bears,
What griefs and wonders in the winding years."

With this quotation from the Bacchae of Euripides as her theme, Laura Krey, in a first novel, has taken a quarter of a century out of the early turbulent history of Texas and has clothed it with the flesh and blood of Cavin and Lucina Darcy, their own children and those entrusted to their care, and the other settlers who made Texas "safe for democracy," and gave it the stamp which it bears to this day.

Cavin Darcy, with the blood of old Southern families in his veins, leaves his home on the Brazos River in Texas to fight, not only the Yankees, but "all the people everywhere who want to run the world just one way and make everybody alive fit into their tight little system, whatever it is." It was this which led him back to Texas, with his Georgian bride, and carried him through the convulsed years of near-anarchy when the settlers fought off the attempts of bureaucrats to regiment their lives. It was this which led to the formation of the Hunter's Club, a form of the Ku Klux Klan, the members of which wore white masks, not to hide behind them, but to frighten the superstitious darkies who, drunken with their new-found freedom and misled by the patronage of the Northerners, were the cause of many disorders in the state.

The tale told by Laura Krey, in places rather archaically (" 'Don't look back, Sweet,' he said ardently, gathering his bride into his arms. 'Look at me!' "—When was the last time that the hero was ardent about the heroine?) is worth telling and worth hearing. Descendant of an old Texan family, the authoress retells

here, with the license of the fictionist, the stories she heard on the long nights on the Brazos from the lips of men and women who took part in the making of the history of the state. The book is long, but its story is a long one.

. . . *and Tell of Time* cannot be evaluated in a single sentence. That it is a good book and that the authoress is not only a student of history but of human nature as well can be said without fear of contradiction. But when that has been said not much has been told. The book belongs to that increasingly large body of American literature which is taking the skeletons out of the closet of our century and a half of national existence and telling us why we are what we are. As a part of this literature it will one day fit into its proper place in the final history of our culture, if that culture is not undermined before we learn what the score is, to mix metaphors slightly.

LIKE all books—true books, that is—about men and women, it is a book of adventure, although not of the type of *Drums along the Mohawk* and *Northwest Passage*. It need not be, for the river of life runs broad and quiet at times, as well as narrow and turbulent at others. This story of the successive stages of the struggle and growth of a conquered people, working out its own salvation and still retaining at bottom the fundamental ideals of the cause for which both sides fought in the Civil War, perhaps gives us a better picture of modern America's heritage of vision and courage than we have had in a long day.

Knowing how "best sellers" are made and having unpleasant memories of some recent ones still fresh in mind, the recommendation that . . . *and Tell of Time* is a best seller will not mean much. None the less, it deserves to be. You may have guessed by this time that the reviewer is trying to make up his mind about the classification of this book. That it can be recommended for reading, there is no doubt. That it will be enjoyed is also certain. And some of you will ponder parts of it.

Sullivan's Odyssey

THE EDUCATION OF AN AMERICAN. By Mark Sullivan. Illustrated. Doubleday, Doran & Co., New York. 320 pages. $3.50.

ON THIS reviewer's library shelves this autobiography of Mark Sullivan's younger years will stand beside Bliss Perry's *And Gladly Teach*. Though there are certain very marked contrasts between the two men—the one, a New England Protestant; the other, an Irish Roman Catholic—the one predominantly a teacher; the other a journalist—yet there is a striking similarity in their background and upbringing which, in both instances, was of the typically American type that made our country great. The reading of books like these fills one with a feeling of nostalgia and elicits the natural question whether the average young American's upbringing today is governed by the same fundamental principles as was that of Perry and Sullivan; if not, we may be certain that the American of tomorrow will not be the American of yesterday and today.

Mark Sullivan, commentator, whose

penetrating observations appear four times a week in many newspapers the country over, tells an interesting, even fascinating, story of his life, particularly of the early years, before 1912, interspersing a number of brilliant pen-pictures of relatives, friends, and associates as they appear on the scene. One receives an unforgettable impression of his Pennsylvania home and Irish-immigrant parents: of a father, stern and conscientious, whose speech was flavored with Gaelic phrases and eighteenth century pronunciations, who predicted the end of the World War because hogs had risen to twenty cents a pound, the same high price at which hogs had been sold two weeks before the close of the Civil War; of a mother, hard working, saving, ever-fearful of poverty, who had given ten children to the world, the youngest being Mark, whom she shielded from the heaviest work on the farm whenever she could; of a home on a fifty-two acre farm which his father had bought in 1867 and of which he said, "I will never leave this farm till I go in my long box," also admonishing his sons, "Never sell this farm; no matter what happens to you in the cities, this will be a shelter to you." Mark adds, "We never did. I write these words in the room in which I was born."

From early boyhood until he went away to college Mark Sullivan did his share of the work the farm naturally required and thus had a real taste of long hours and back-straining labor; yet he comes to the defense of the factory workers and their demands for shorter hours with this cogent argument: "A farmer, and persons in some other occupations where the worker can set his own pace, can work long hours and is often happier and better off when working than when doing some of the things he does when not working. The justification for shorter hours in repetitive factory work is to increase the period during which the worker is released from a tyranny of machinery, of bells and signals and time-clocks."

THERE runs through his story a love of home and family that is most refreshing, and a justifiable pride of ancestry. Mark tells of the joys of youth on the farm, the games, hunting, nutting, the tales of Irish folk-lore, the superstitions of his clan, the boyhood pranks, and the urge of getting ahead in the world. When Mark left for normal school at the age of 14, he was the seventh in the procession of Sullivan boys that walked "down that farm lane" to seek fame and fortune in the world outside. We find the young man determined to get a college education after hearing the Princeton University Glee Club sing. He barely missed a military career, for after going to West Point with an appointment as alternate, he was rejected for minor physical defects. The result was his entry into the journalistic field. He edited a newspaper before he was 21. His painstaking research is apparent in his weeks of work on an article on the vanishing buffalo, for which he wrote to heads of zoos, game commissioners, and owners of private herds the country over. When he went back to Harvard to study law, he supported himself by writing for the *Boston Transcript*. His career as a lawyer was very short: it consisted of one case to serve a

subpoena on a defendant who fled from one New England village to another. For his services Mark received a fee of fifty dollars, gross. "That fifty dollars," says Mark, "is the only payment I ever received from the law, or from any other occupation or source except writing."

Mr. Sullivan's career as journalist was well-begun when he accepted a commission from Edward W. Bok of the *Ladies' Home Journal* to investigate a certain patent medicine company which was suing Bok for libel. Sullivan's investigations uncovered illegal practices by patent medicine companies that were astounding. This work drew the attention of others to the young writer. S. S. McClure employed him for a time, and his pen-picture of McClure is the best and most sympathetic that has ever come to this reviewer's notice. His work for McClure led in turn to employment by *Collier's,* under Norman Hapgood and Robert J. Collier, and he became a national figure, which he is to this day.

Politician's Progress

BEHIND THE BALLOTS. The Personal History of a Politician. James A. Farley. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York. 1938. 392 pages. $3.00.

THIS book is easy to read, for it is written in an informal, chatty style, free from those labored efforts toward literary excellence that make many publications of this sort so artificial and boresome. It is also a very interesting book. With deft hand the writer—whoever that may be!—sketches men, issues, and events that occupied the center of the political stage in recent years and in some instances still occupy it today. Last but not least, it is also an instructive book, for it leads us into the inner sanctuaries of the political hierarchy and behind the scenery of convention halls and shows us how political machines are operated and how a government based upon the party system functions. Of course, Mr. Farley does not tell everything he knows, but since he is still in the political game one can hardly expect him to do so, especially in view of the fact that many of the persons about whom he writes are still very much alive.

In a certain sense this is Mr. Farley's autobiography. It tells of his humble birth and childhood at Grassy Point, N.Y.; of his meager schooling; of his work at a brick-plant and as bartender; of his struggles in New York City at the age of seventeen as an eight-dollar-a-week bookkeeper; of his prowess as first baseman of the Grassy Point "Alphas"; and of his entrance into politics as town clerk of Grassy Point. His rise as a politician was phenomenal. At thirty he was Democratic county chairman of Rockland County; at thirty-four, a member of the State Assembly; at forty-two, Democratic state chairman; and at forty-four, chairman of the Democratic national committee and postmaster general. As he himself says, with an affectionate pat on his own back, "The young man who got his start pulling door-bells and hauling voters to the polls at Grassy Point has come a long way—to be candid, much farther than he ever expected." Yes, he has come a long way, for he is at present the most powerful man

among Mr. Roosevelt's associates, a campaign manager *par excellence,* and a master at political finesse.

But Mr. Farley's success was not a mere accident, as some may suppose; it did not drop into his ample lap as an unmerited gift of the political gods. Two facts stand out in bold relief from his graphic account; first: that he took a long view from the very outset and planned his career with the greatest care, although, as he himself confesses, the ultimate goal of his ambition was a seat in the State Senate; second, that he always worked hard and with all his innate shrewdness, skillfully making use of everything and everybody he could lay hands upon to further his political aspirations. If we may accept Mr. Farley's own verdict, he earned every preferment and honor he ever obtained.

However, it is as a collection of political memoirs that *Behind the Ballots* is of especial interest. Not only does Mr. Farley furnish the reader with engaging thumb nail portraits of prominent men in the political field, such as Alfred E. Smith, President Roosevelt, Huey Long, Colonel House, Louis McHenry Howe, Charles F. Murphy, the "Brain Trusters," and the rest of the Democratic hierarchy, but he also gives detailed descriptions of the political campaigns which he so adroitly managed for Mr. Roosevelt, of the great political conventions, of cabinet meetings, and of his bitterly criticized activities as Postmaster General and Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. His comments on the Supreme Court, the future of the New Deal, and the Third Term are illuminating, to say the least, and the many human interest stories woven into his narrative invest it with a color and a sprightliness that are refreshing.

In short, we may not like Jim Farley for various reasons, but his book is really worth reading.

Root of Evil

A PENNY FOR THE POOR. By Bertolt Brecht. Translated from the German by Desmond I. Vesey. Verses translated by Christopher Isherwood. Hillman-Curl, Inc., New York. 1938. 396 pages. $2.50.

OBVIOUSLY a modern counterpart to John Gay's *Beggar's Opera,* Bertolt Brecht's *A Penny For The Poor* will inevitably be compared to that famous satire. Translated from the *Drei Groschen* operetta which ran for over five years in the German opera houses of the pre-Hitler era, this novel is a shocking satire on the ways of London's economic life. The immorality and utter hardheartedness of the characters reveal a financial underworld unknown to most of us. The sole motivating force is money. Wives, children, family ties, decency, honor: all are sacrificed to the desire for economic power.

A Penny For The Poor is the story of J. J. Peachum, owner of a beggar's outfitting firm; his daughter, Polly Peachum; Mr. Coax, who attempts (successfully) to hornswoggle the British Government into buying some unseaworthy ships during the Boer War; Mr. MacHeath, proprietor of the Bargain (or Bilge) Shops; and sundry other shady financiers. There are murders, riots of the unemployed,

detailed descriptions of crooked government officials sending British Tommies to watery graves in rotten ships, absurdly fantastic prison scenes and court trials. What plot there is in the novel revolves around Mr. MacHeath's efforts to obtain the chain store monopoly of London. The monopoly is established to the accompaniment of the theme:

"No, gentlemen, this truth we cannot shirk:
Man lives exclusively by dirty work."

There are sadistic and revolting scenes in the novel. The humor is not only vitriolic, but exaggerated to such a degree that a reader is oftentimes repelled. As an example of biting proletarian humor the novel is intensely interesting. The book suffers, however, from an over-supply of characters. Quite often the action is jerky. But if one wants a contemporary portrait of certain sections of society, lampooned in another century by John Gay, this novel should serve the purpose. Fashions, customs, and habits may have changed, but ideals and morals remain distressingly the same. Mr. MacHeath, in a lengthy address to an old-fashioned burglar, says: "What is the burgling of a bank compared to the founding of a bank? What is a pick-lock compared to a debenture share? What is the murder of a man compared to the employment of a man? . . . In this present age one uses more peaceful methods. Brute force is out of date. Why send out murderers when one can employ bailiffs?"

The translation is very well done. Exceptional also are the verse translations by Christopher Isherwood.

My Country

AMERICA NOW. (An Inquiry Into Civilization in the United States.) By Thirty-Six Americans. Edited, with an introduction, by Harold E. Stearns. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York and London. 1938. 580 pages. $3.00.

BEFORE a patient can be intelligently treated and cured his ills must be diagnosed. This volume might be viewed as a diagnostic study of present-day American society. A real effort is made to cover the major aspects of this important subject. The topics treated are as diverse as advertising and religion, birth control and music, invention and psychiatry, science and sport, radio and race prejudice, etc.

The five hundred and eighty pages in this volume represent the collaborative effort of thirty-six American scholars and of three foreigners who, in a supplement, present their views of America. The American writers who participated show a striking similarity in point of view, with the exception of the gentlemen who wrote the chapters on "Advertising" and "Catholicism." They write in the main in a matter of fact style and struggle at any rate to give their respective subjects reasonably objective treatment. The chapter on "Advertising," written by a Mr. Durstine, member of a well-known advertising firm, is in the breezy style of one writing for a real estate subdivider or the latest cure for corns. The chapter on "Catholicism" is distinguished by its positive, aggressive, dogmatic presentation of the Catholic point of view.

The consensus of opinion on the part of these thirty-six collaborating authors seems all to be to the effect that America's advancement in things material excels anything comparable which has ever been achieved anywhere else in the world, but that the contributions of contemporary America to culture and things spiritual are of no great consequence. The Mexican, the Chinese, and the Englishman, the three foreigners who wrote the supplement, seem to agree to this point of view most heartily.

One is amazed, when reading the book, to observe how often the depression which began in 1929 is referred to as one of the truly important and vital factors which have contributed toward making art, labor, business, the family, etc., what they are today. The effects of that experience, like those of the World War, have reached down, it seems, into every detail of life.

The chief problems of America today are of a spiritual and moral character and have to do with social relationships: those of government and the governed, capital and labor, the negro and the white man, descendants of one race and those of another. The American has learned how to provide shiny bath tubs and clean towels for the masses of the people, and if one believes that human happiness lies in the possession of material things, as the author of the chapter on "Advertising" apparently does, then all should be well with the America of today. America has not, however, as yet learned to live by the rule of love, and hence life is characterized by tensions in the home, in business, in government, and in international affairs.

An entire chapter of twelve pages is devoted to the subject of birth control and population. The author of this chapter shows how widespread the practice of birth control has come to be in our country and how the opinions of the law, the public, medical men, and many churchmen have changed on this much controverted subject.

TWO chapters are devoted to religion. The one on "Protestantism" was written by H. Paul Douglass, a well-known student of American church life and activity, and is characterized by a want of positiveness—no doubt for the very reason that this is also the lamentable characteristic of American Protestantism in general. The chapter on "Catholicism" is an outspoken, straightforward condemnation of the "materialistic, naturalistic, agnostic" attitude of what the writer is pleased to call "the typical American" (p. 540) and a glorification of Catholicism with its unity of faith and doctrine and strong organizational cohesiveness as the one hope of America.

Generally speaking the reading of this volume inspires one with hope. Only a few years ago students of American society found the social scene so enveloped in fog that they were quite incapable of presenting an intelligent diagnosis of America's ills. This volume would make it appear as though the fog is gradually lifting and as though existing problems are being seen and defined more clearly.

A Christian who reads the book should not only learn therefrom to distinguish more wisely between the true and false values of life, but he should also gain the impression that America needs nothing more than the comforting and motivating force of Christ's saving love.

The present reviewer read this volume with a great deal of interest, and while he does not by any means subscribe to many of the moral and religious attitudes expressed therein, he does consider it a valuable social study which is well worth the price.

Income

Behind senatorial bombast there are moments of absolute frankness. Senator Borah recently informed the Senate that there are still 40,000,000 people in the United States existing on less than a decent standard of living. Senator Pepper added the postscript to this not altogether new discovery by telling his colleagues that 39.8 per cent of the population makes less than $1,000 a year, 80 per cent makes less than $2,000, and 88 per cent makes less than $2,500 annually. On the other hand 0.05 per cent of the total population makes over $100,000 a year. Collectively this 0.05 per cent manages to corral 10.6 per cent of the whole national income. Did we see some one raising his hand?

Jews

If Jews were as astute business men as they are reputed to be, Rabbi Henry L. Stern, of Montreal, told a luncheon club, they would have copyrighted the Bible, done a land-office business and purchased Palestine.—*United Press Dispatch.*

Excess

The excess of liberty, whether in States or individuals, seems only to pass into excess of slavery. And so tyranny naturally arises out of democracy, and the most aggravated form of tyranny and slavery out of the most extreme form of liberty.—*The Republic of Plato.*

THE CRESSET SURVEY OF BOOKS

BY THE EDITORS

A brief glance at books published during the month preceding the date of publication of THE CRESSET.

UNFORGOTTEN YEARS. By Logan Pearsall Smith. Little, Brown and Company, Boston. 296 pages. $2.50.

THE famous author of *Trivia* presents his last will and testament. Perhaps the book itself is not especially important but Mr. Smith's wide following makes this notice necessary. For many years he has been acknowledged as one of the great stylists of our age. In this volume he presents his mellow, irreverent memoirs. Like Henry Adams he knows nothing about the Christian religion. Not worth reading, except possibly by students of the style of a day now, fortunately or unfortunately, dead.

OUR PROMISED LAND. By Richard L. Neuberger. Macmillan Co., New York. 398 pages. $3.00.

There is general agreement among historians that the story of America during the 19th century must finally be written in terms of the vanishing frontier. Mr. Neuberger places the last frontier in the great Pacific Northwest. In a series of fascinating pictures he presents the Grand Coulee Dam and other significant developments on our last frontier. The Northwest today has 40 per cent of the country's hydroelectric power, two-fifths of the timber, and one-fifth of the wheat. Small wonder that it is paradise to the refugees from the grim desert of the dust bowl.

MATTHEW ARNOLD. By Lionel Trilling. W. W. Norton & Co., New York. 458 pages. $3.50.

The most influential critic of the 19th century is still a perennially fruitful subject for literary historians. It is difficult to understand the currents of thought in the 19th century without some knowledge of Matthew Arnold. Mr. Trilling presents one of the most comprehensive studies of the whole man. Since many of the roots of the 20th century reach back into the 19th, this is an important book.

WOODROW WILSON: LIFE AND LETTERS. By Ray Stannard Baker. Doubleday, Doran and Company, New York. 604 pages. $5.00.

Few figures in American history have been more important and mys-

terious than the President of the United States during the fateful years 1913-1921. In Volume VII of Mr. Baker's thorough biography the story of the war years is begun. Mr. Baker's method is refreshingly new. He follows Woodrow Wilson from day to day—in his appointments, letters, and conferences. Mr. Baker believes that a remarkably consistent course in the actions of the War President becomes evident. Mr. Wilson always considered the United States an "associated" power, not one of the Allies. When the final history of the second decade of the 20th century is written, Mr. Baker's careful and painstaking research will be immensely valuable.

ADDRESS UNKNOWN. By Kressmann Taylor. Simon & Schuster, New York. 64 pages. $1.00.

The magazine "Story" is not particularly prosperous. A few months ago, however, it published a story, "Address Unknown," which, ballyhooed by Walter Winchell, attracted widespread attention. In a series of letters it tells the grim tale of the making of a Nazi and the horrible revenge of a Jewish friend in America. Critics have said that it is directly in the tradition of De Maupassant. This is not entirely true. It is a little too pat and well made. Nevertheless, it is worth reading as it is here presented in complete form. The condensation in the *Reader's Digest* did not convey the full power of the original.

NAZI GERMANY: ITS WOMEN AND FAMILY LIFE. By Clifford Kirkpatrick. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis. 353 pages. $3.00.

In the constant discussion of Germany's military and economic problems other factors in her life are often forgotten. Mr. Kirkpatrick, professor of Sociology at the University of Minnesota, has spent a year in Germany examining the condition of German womanhood. He presents a checkered picture. He finds, for example, that the campaign for more babies still leaves Germany 15 per cent below the requirements for a constant population. Nazi leaders have urged artists who paint family portraits to include at least four children in each picture. The author believes, however, that the psychological satisfaction of National Socialism has extended also to German womanhood. The vast *Frauenwerk* has absorbed all individual women's groups in Germany.

The FEBRUARY Magazines

Each month THE CRESSET *presents a check list of important articles in leading magazines which will be of interest to our readers.*

Fortune

Fortune's Survey

Some of the latest results of this survey are: (1) 55 per cent of those questioned consider it foolish to oppose unionization of labor (factory laborers: 61; executives: 68!), 28 regard it as wise, and 17 don't know. (2) District Attorney Dewey is first choice for the Republican presidential nomination in 1940, but only by a nose. (3) 47.9 per cent think that chain stores should be let alone; 37.3 would tax them extra; 6.3 wish to put them out of business; 8.5 don't know. (4) The public does not believe that businessmen could run the government better than the New Dealers do, nor, on the other hand, that the New Dealers could run business better than businessmen. Evidently no migration is desired in either direction. (5) It is held that a man just out of college has no better chance to make a living than a high-school graduate with four years of experience, but that he has an advantage for later life. (6) 61 per cent think that incomes in the U. S. should not be limited. A majority of even the unemployed and the very poor take that position.

The High Cost of Peace

In this article *Fortune* makes a comprehensive review of the military and industrial problems that bear on the current discussion of preparedness and rearmament in the U. S. What should be our strategy to carry out a "hemisphere defense" policy—if that is what we want? What rôle, in such a policy, is to be assigned to the various arms of the military service? What is our present state of effectiveness or deficiency? What measures can be taken to improve matters where improvement is desirable? Is there any good reason for feverishly building up a gigantic air force when planes become obsolete so fast? How would the mobilization and correlation of industry proceed in the event of war? These and similar questions are thoroughly ventilated.

Forum

The Press Can Do No Wrong

By H. L. Smith

When *Fortune,* in 1936, sampled public opinion on what agency is most often guilty of abusing its power, 41.8 per cent of those who replied voted this distinction to the press. On a similar question last summer the "press vote" gained a further 2 per cent. Why this antipathy? "The public hates the press," Mr. Smith holds, "because it thinks, rightly or wrongly, that the publisher cloaks a great deal of dirty work behind silken words." This attitude is fostered by the smugness of the press, its imperviousness to outside criticism, its selfishness, and its hypocrisy. "Publishers call for censorship of radio and continue to print filth that is fully as harmful. They moralize about sex degenerates and then print pictures that are anything but soothing to other perverts." The press will have to give a better performance than it has been giving, or the radio, the movie, and the news magazine will take its place and reduce it to "merely an offstage noise."

Slum Clearance: a Flight from Reality

By Robert F. Marshall

This article presents facts concerning the activity of the United States Housing Authority, under its head, Nathan Straus. It is the story of an effort to materialize fine intentions and laudable dreams with a lordly disregard for such troublesome things as reality and mathematics—in short, an example of the muddleheadedness that has of late become the order of the day in American public affairs.

What Suicide Leaves Behind

Anonymous

Five years ago a man whose business had fallen on evil days committed suicide, probably deluding himself that he would serve his wife and two children better in death through his large insurance policies than he could hope to serve them by living on. His widow, in this pathetic human document, tells of the sad havoc which the suicide of the husband and father has made in the three lives that he left behind. Worse than the grief, the loneliness, the bitterness, and the heart-searchings is the change that has come over the relations of the remaining members of the family to each other. "I and my children," the mother writes, after these five years, "talk to each other always over a space that is exactly the length and breadth and depth of an open grave."

Scribner's

Hugh A. Drum

By George Fielding Eliot

Major Eliot, author of the book, "The Ramparts We Watch," in this article examines a General who may be the Army's next Chief of Staff. It is an interesting biographical sketch in which the author traces the rise of a leader who became lieutenant at the age of eighteen and whose valiant record carried him step by step to the most important positions the Army has to offer. Drum has brought back a general recognition of the importance of infantry in modern warfare. Another contribution of his is the creation of the General Headquarters' Air Force. He also helped in building the Civilian Conservation Corps. From 1935 to 1937 he was in charge of the Hawaiian Department. From Hawaii, he was transferred to Chicago to command the Sixth Corps Area, and a year later to his present command of the Second Corps Area. It is significant that this area, covering the Atlantic Seaboard, long neglected, has now become the care of the General who so greatly contributed to the Pacific defence plans.

Buy As You Go

By John T. Flynn

The author of this article has been writing authoritatively on business and finance for twenty years. Here he discusses in a sober manner the credit device usually called installment selling. Contrary to the view of Mr. Babson, the well-known economist, who views installment selling with alarm, Mr. Flynn shows that there are sound reasons for continuing this kind of credit, since, in proportion to the amount of retail business done annually in our country, it amounts to only a little more than 7% of the total. He sees no danger to our economic system if installment selling is kept within reasonable limits and restricted to the purchase of such things as automobiles, farm machinery, refrigerators, furniture, and the like. He points out among other things that the selling of automobiles on the installment plan has made possible the mass production of automobiles and a considerable reduction in price to the buyer. However, he does not recommend buying on the installment plan the types of goods which, in the trade, are called "soft" and which belong in the category of current consumables—such as clothing. He also condemns the practice of using the so-called personal-loan-company credit, widely employed in the case of used cars. He points out that while the regular finance corporations operate on a plan which makes the cost of the credit

about 11%, the same loan taken with a personal-loan-company will bring an interest charge of about 30% a year.

The Resurrection of Mr. Volstead

By WILL IRWIN

This is a careful analysis of repeal. We were happy to note, while reading this article, that a number of things which we had discussed in previous issues of the CRESSET on this question were borne out by Mr. Irwin in his comprehensive study of the whole matter. He looks at both sides, that of the heads of the liquor industry and that of the dry organizations. There seems to be no doubt that conditions are as bad as, if not worse than, they were before prohibition. He quotes a veteran executive of a national liquor business to the effect that "if this business doesn't clean up, we are headed for a disagreeable surprise." He shows that in spite of the efforts of the leaders in the liquor business to advocate moderate drinking, these are frustrated by the activities of irresponsible groups and by a tie up between the liquor traffic and machine politics. On account of the high tax on liquor, the bootlegger is still with us. In view of the fact that the Drys had predicted the approximate time when our country would become dry prior to prohibition, their latest prediction may be studied with interest. They hope to blot up the United States by 1950. This time, however, they hope to avoid the previous mistake of leaving enforcement to Uncle Sam. "They propose to proceed for most of the distance on the old plan, drying up first small political units, then the counties and big cities, finally the states. This accomplished, they intend to call on the national administration to enforce that almost-forgotten second article of the Twenty-first Amendment which provides that the Federal Government shall co-operate to prevent liquor from entering any state contrary to its laws. It would be a more flexible form of prohibition and therefore, in theory, more workable."

Harper's

The Emperor of Japan

By JOHN GUNTHER

The veneration and awe which the patriotic Japanese have for their Emperor is the fact which this article presents and explains. The religious factor and the religious symbolism make the Japanese Throne unique and also place a mighty political weapon into the hands of those who rule in the name of the Emperor. To

illustrate this proposition the author gives an interesting summary of the history of the 2500-year-old Japanese dynasty and a description of the life, the traditions, and the influence of the Emperor. Since January, 1938, an "Imperial Headquarters" has been established to serve as a permanent advisory council to the Emperor during the present crisis. This council, whose membership is not definitely known, is now the actual ruling power in Japan. This article is valuable for an understanding of the Japanese government.

The Social Security "Reserve" Swindle

By JOHN T. FLYNN

The provision of the Social Security Act which enables the government to create a reserve fund of 47 billion dollars is a farce, because this amount will not actually be in reserve but will have been borrowed and used by the government for other purposes. "In short, there is no reserve. There will be no reserve. The whole thing is a solemn and cruel farce." The author, however, is not only vigorous in his criticism of this feature of the Act, but also sets forth the advantages which he believes would come from a pay-as-you-go system. This system, recommended in the report of the Cabinet Committee, which was signed by four members of the Cabinet, was changed when "an official of the Treasury Department called upon the President and spun him a whimsical yarn of fairy finance." The provision for a reserve of 47 billion dollars has, according to the author's investigation, "the support of no first- or second-class economist, actuary, or finance expert either here or abroad." Mr. Flynn presents a strong case indeed against this provision of the Social Security Act.

Labor's Two Houses

By EDWARD LEVINSON

This comparative study of the recent conventions of the A.F.ofL. and the C.I.O., of their constitutions, their administration, and their leadership places the C.I.O. in a very favorable light. The assertion that the Communists are not in control of the C.I.O. is supported by the claim that of its almost 4,000,000 members only a little more than 800,000 are Communists. The attitude of John L. Lewis toward Communists is summarized as follows: "He is willing to tolerate the Communists so long as they run their unions in constructive, non-political fashion. He will not permit them, openly or covertly, to assume important positions in the leadership of the C.I.O." Basic differences separating labor's two houses are discussed.

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Anti-Semitism

SIR:

"Anti-Semitism in America is growing. It is far stronger than polls and public addresses would have us believe. It is like a ground-swell." I heard a similar warning at the Institute of Public Affairs, held at the University of Virginia last summer. Living in a community where there are but a dozen Jewish people, one is not apt to take that warning very seriously. And even though one reads a metropolitan newspaper daily in which the Jewish problem in Europe is under constant discussion, one remains apathetic, suspicious of the hand of propaganda. Not long ago I glanced through some propaganda material that flooded the world during the World War, and the present horror pictures and stories are so very similar. How much truth is there in this business anyway? And in the face of all these reports from the other side on the treatment of the Jews, why is anti-Semitism growing in America? Ought the effect not to be the opposite? Considering the historic attitude of the American mind toward the underdog, we yet have the alarm bell sounding in our midst, warning us that here in America the feeling is growing, not for the Jew but against him! That has puzzled me and I have been suspicious.

Recently I was a guest in the home of one of our business men, and what I heard there across the table confirmed me in my attitude toward this racial problem. How we wandered into this subject, I do not recall. But what this man related was significant. He pointed out by means of several cases that this racial problem seriously affected his business, causing a loss of trade in considerable proportions. As I recall, every case involved a Russian Jew. I do not remember that he mentioned any German Jews. But in the mind of this businessman a Jew now is a Jew, whether Russian, German, Polish or whatever nationality may be attached to him. And he emphasized that every Gentile businessman today is facing a serious struggle to keep his trade because of an unwarranted, insidious form of boycott used by Jewish dealers. And that here in America!

During the last year his company suffered heavy losses in trade at the hands of Jewish retail dealers who handle his goods. He first became aware of this situation when it was brought to his attention as an officer of the company that one dealer after another was reducing his purchases of daily supplies, in some cases as much as two-thirds. Concerned about this situation he called on these dealers personally to discover the reason. After hemming about for quite a while, one dealer told him that he

could not sell the goods because it had become known in the trade as "Nazi goods." Astonished, the company official wanted to know who had put this label on his goods. But the dealer declined to commit himself for a long time. Finally the company official threatened him with the law, that he would sue him for libel. It was then that the dealer made his surprising revelation. He claimed to have seen in a certain magazine (since discontinued, I believe) that the company had made a contribution to the "Nazi Relief Fund" in the amount of $25,000! The official demanded to know in what number this had been published, but the dealer again would not commit himself. Finally he offered him a thousand dollars for that particular number of that magazine. The company had never made such a contribution. It would sue the publishers for libel and make that dealer appear in court as witness. It was then that the dealer admitted that he had not seen the story in the magazine, but others had told it to him. He agreed to handle the company's goods and purchase as much as usual.

Calling on other dealers, he found a similar situation. The firm was being slandered as a Nazi company and its goods were Nazi goods. Every Jewish dealer had a similar story with variations. One even claimed that the salesman of a competitor so designated his goods. They were boycotting his goods on the basis of such gossip. Similar conditions prevailed in other lines, my host declared. He stated that a large tobacco company had to close one of its warehouses for the same reason; and it is still closed. I was given to understand that this Jewish whispering campaign was running wild and creating mistrust and uncertainty in the business world. One is taken aback by reports of this kind and one wonders how much of this wicked propaganda is being used by Jews for their own profit!

This is the first time that I had first hand reports of such conditions. "Anti-Semitism in America is growing." To be sure; but who is responsible for this growth of ill-will? What reason would Christians in America have to hate the Jewish people under ordinary circumstances? As I said in the beginning, the typical American attitude has always been one of sympathy for the underdog. Certainly enough horror reports have come from Europe to make us feel for the plight of the Jew. I can agree with you that "to hate the Jew is both un-Christian and unreasonable." But—what about the things the Jew is doing here in America? Is he playing on our Christian heart-strings, appealing to our emotion of pity, and at the same time laughing behind our backs? I wonder. The thought has occurred to me that it might perhaps have been more effective to address a warning, not to the Christian or Gentile element in America against harboring hatred for the Jewish element in our population, but to the Jewish element, and that directly and not parenthetically. The Jew apparently is himself responsible for the growth of anti-Semitism in America. And to my mind the Jews ought to be put on the defensive and ought to be made to fight this evil in their own midst. We would have a great

deal more respect for them if they did. This condition ought to be dragged into the open. How typical are these experiences of this businessman?

G. E. HAGEMAN
Charlottesville, Virginia

Nadir Notes

SIR:

I place "Notes and Comment" at the top of my list of preferences. If it is at all possible I should like to see this section cultivate a little more of a world, rather than a purely American, outlook. Mind you, I fully realize that we in Australia number less than ten subscribers. This might almost be taken as a reflection on the intelligence of Australian Lutherans. The service rendered by Vol. I of THE CRESSET is simply too good to be scorned. It makes me rather sad to think that we cannot claim 250 names on the roll of your subscribers.

We, therefore, have little right to ask for anything but an American outlook. Generally speaking, however, I am very pleased indeed with the excellent balance that has been preserved in "Notes and Comment."

Ever since I became a subscriber to the *Walther League Messenger* I have been impressed by the democratic outlook that the American Lutheran Church has. The frankness noticed in expressing views for and against, the clear headed and not narrow minded outlook on questions affecting young people, the freedom of expression granted to readers of THE CRESSET—all these things excite my desire (often expressed aloud) to visit your shores and join in some of the stirring things you do.

SYDNEY A. DOWNIE
Norwood, South Australia

Against Japan

SIR:

I think the present Sino-Japanese conflict concerns us doubly: First, because it is a bloody attack upon the idea on which America is built—democracy; second, because it adds to those existing in Spain and central Europe, another conflict that threatens world peace.

We know that there must be many people in Japan who do not uphold what is happening in China. They are as much horrified and ashamed as we are, and their hearts are as heavy as our own. In due time, perhaps, they may find a way to assert themselves and take in hand the reins of government. However, waiting without doing something about the evils that shock us is not very satisfactory.

Indeed, I feel certain that, if the American people would have taken as vigorous a stand against Japanese aggression in the Far East as they have over Nazi expansion in central Europe, and the recent wave of racial and religious persecution within Germany, the terrible inhuman treatment to which the unfortunate inhabitants of China are being so cruelly subjected would have been halted long ago.

However, it is still not too late to check this ruthless invasion of that sorely smitten land—China. But the sooner we act, the quicker our efforts

will bear fruit. As a friend of China, let me suggest three ways through which this might best be accomplished:

First, by voluntary donation to the various organizations which are so nobly endeavoring to raise funds to help alleviate the suffering among hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians, made homeless by the present hostilities.

Second, by urging our congressmen to introduce and support legislation designed to stop the sale of war materials to aggressor nations. War supplies from western countries (particularly Great Britain and the United States) are one cause for the present suffering throughout China. Only by stopping trade with Japan can western nations cease to be partners with her in the dastardly crime her fascist, military clique is committing on the Asiatic continent today.

Third, by participating in the rapidly growing consumer's boycott movement against Japanese goods. In every civilized nation, people are refusing to purchase merchandise imported from Japan. Japan depends on foreign sales for a large part of the money she needs to buy the war materials that cannot be produced at home. Our refusal to buy Japanese goods will shut off a primary source of capital to Japan; and together with similar movements in other democratic countries, our boycott can starve Japanese aggression.

China, like Loyalist Spain, is really fighting the world's war for democracy. World forces are at work over there. The principles of freedom are at stake. It, therefore, behooves everyone who cherishes freedom and peace to help and sustain her in this cause.

JAMES G. WEBER
Markesan, Wisconsin

The German Colonies

SIR:

I surely like to read THE CRESSET. But the article about the "German Colonies" was too one-sided. The writer certainly knows about the facts in the colonies of other nations. Even if he was writing about German colonies he should have mentioned as a matter of justice the cruelties of other nations, cruelties which are committed today in the name of civilization. The history of English colonization is certainly not pleasant (Boer Wars a.s.o.) and the cruelties in the Belgian Congo are not forgotten.

The mismanagement must not have been so bad. England was not able with all its power to break the resistance in German Southwest Africa. Lettow Vorbeck and his soldiers—mostly natives—without any help and assistance from the outside —resisted valiantly in the battles with the combined forces of the allies. Such a fight for four years is only possible when soldiers have learned loyalty. And loyalty does not stand the test if it is based upon brutality. There must be love and admiration in the hearts of the subjects.

B. F. KORTE
Bellwood, Illinois

Contributors—Problems—Final Notes

THE necessity for comment on the many facets of our civilization as well as the unusually large number of book reviews have compelled us to postpone the publication of a number of major articles. Our article this month is from the fluent pen of *E. Schaller* of Clear Lake, South Dakota. In graphic manner he manages to place his finger on some of the fundamental faults in modern education.

The Editor's Lamp

Our guest reviewer of the month is *George Petrick (Wisdom's Gate),* freelance writer of Chicago, Ill.

Apparently the story of Calvary and the Cross is still able to evoke the spirit of poetry. We have received an unusual number of verses expressing the mood of the Lenten season. One of these *(Passion Pictures)* is being presented in this issue. Others will follow in the April issue. *Andre Du Clos,* we suspect, is the pseudonym of a modest cleric.

"Ministerial Student" is an amazingly young man who feels that perhaps his schoolmates in high school will not take kindly to his interest in poetry. Readers of his sonnet will agree that it shows definite promise. He has caught both the spirit and the form of the classic manner.

Home Sweet Home

"Somewhere on an old Kearns farm that has now become an Española Terrace Gardens the ideal American residence will rise some day. It will borrow its porch from Pisa, its roof from Naples, its chimneys from Granada, and its birdhouses from the steeples of Cadiz. And over the fireplace in the pleasant Florentine living room that looks out across the patio will be the adage: Be it ever so Latin, there's no place like home."—CHARLES MERZ

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

I. In "Notes and Comment" the editors will continue their brief comments on the world of public affairs and modern thought.

II. Major articles during the coming months will include:

GLIMPSES OF NAZI GERMANY
ON BEING RIGHT
DIVORCE IN THE U.S.A.
THE DETECTIVE STORY

III. In future issues the editors will review, among many others, the following books:

STRANGERS ON EARTH ..... *Sverre Norborg*
THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES II ..... *Thomas Babington Macaulay*
THE CHURCH FOLLOWS ITS STUDENTS ..... *Clarence Prouty Shedd*
MUSIC, HISTORY, AND IDEAS ..... *Hugo Leichtentritt*
THE MACMILLAN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS IN ONE VOLUME ..... *Albert E. Wier*
ON A RAINY DAY ..... *Dorothy Canfield Fisher*
Sarah Fisher Scott
THE WILD PALMS ..... *William Faulkner*
SONG OF YEARS ..... *Bess Streeter Aldrich*
MY BATTLE ..... *Adolf Hitler*
THE SEVENTH HOUR ..... *Grace Livingston Hill*
DISPUTED PASSAGE ..... *Lloyd C. Douglas*
STORIES OF THE EAST VIKINGS ..... *G. Bie Ravndal*
REMEMBER THE END ..... *Agnes Sligh Turnbull*
THE SWORD IN THE STONE ..... *T. H. White*
DANGER SIGNAL ..... *Phyllis Bottome*
GUNS OR BUTTER ..... *R. H. Bruce Lockhart*
WHY HITLER CAME INTO POWER ..... *Theodore Abel*
HIGH PRESSURE ..... *Jesse Rainsford Sprague*
I BROADCAST THE CRISIS ..... *H. V. Kaltenborn*